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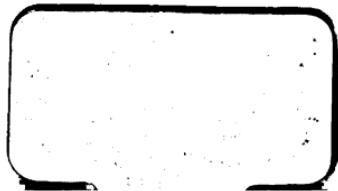
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THE EVANGELIST:

A Monthly Magazine

ADAPTED

FOR GENERAL CIRCULATION.

EDITED BY H. H. S.

"God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."
John iii. 16.

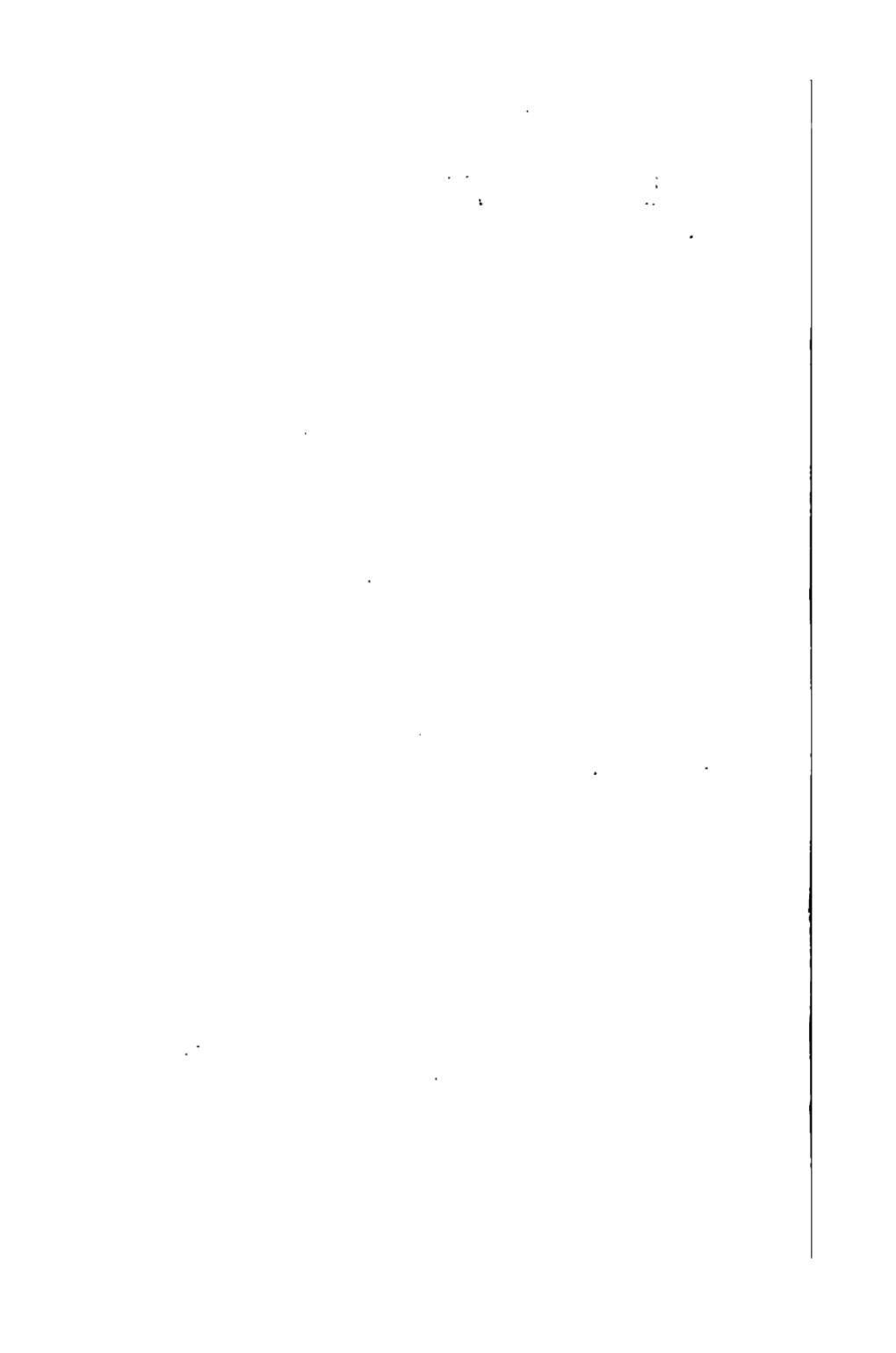
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THE EVANGELIST.

“BY THE HELP OF GOD, SIR.”

NEAR the Infirmary at Leeds, a poor old man, whose grey locks shewed that he was not far from three score years and ten, was asking for alms; so we dropped a trifle into his hat, for which he seemed very grateful.

“Do you expect to go to heaven when you die?” we kindly asked this aged beggar. “Yes, sir, by the help of God,” was his ready reply. “That is the wrong road, friend,” we earnestly assured him; but he seemed astonished that any one should question the soundness of the doctrine he had put forth, that he expected to go to heaven by the help of God; so much so that he added, “What, sir, not by the help of God?” “No, friend, you do not want *help*, you want *life*; you need to be washed from all sin, to be able to stand in God’s holy presence: you do not require God to help or assist you to make yourself better; you want *salvation*, and this can only be accomplished through the blood of Christ, for His blood cleanseth from all sin. God has done everything for the salvation of sinners in the death of His beloved Son, to fit them to stand in His presence; and He now says that “whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.”

The poor old man seemed at once to perceive the folly of thinking of *God's help*, while at the same time He was rejecting *God's salvation*. On leaving him, we could not help thinking how many there are like this aged beggar, who are deceiving themselves with the false thought, that what they need is that God should help them to make themselves better, instead of believing the truth that they are fallen creatures in Adam, born in sin, by nature children of wrath, and therefore that they cannot please God. This truth would show them the folly of trying to mend what God had pronounced incurably bad, and would convince them of the need of looking up to the Lord Jesus risen from the dead, who is now at God's right hand, and of receiving eternal life as God's free gift; and thus know present peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The whole point is, What saith the scripture? What is God's mind about the matter? It is not a question of man's opinion, but of God's *will*. Jesus said, "This is the *will* of Him that sent Me, that *every one* which seeth the Son *and believeth on Him* may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day." (John vi. 40.) This plainly shews us what God's *will* is. The question then is, Are you, dear reader, content to be saved in God's way? God declares in His word that He is so satisfied with the death of Christ, as a just atonement for all our sins, that those who believe are "now justified by His blood." (Rom. v. 9.) The all-important question for your soul then, dear reader, is, are *you* satisfied with the death of the Son of God as a sufficient atonement for all your sins? This is the

point. If so, you have present peace, and present salvation ; for God says, that if you believe on the Lord Jesus you are “justified from all things.” Do you then receive God’s testimony about Jesus Christ and Him crucified ? for he that hath received His testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. Oh, the peace-speaking power of the blood of Jesus ! the all-satisfying portion Christ really is to those who receive Him ! “As many as received Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name : which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” (John i. 12, 13.)

SIN, LOVE, AND FAITH.

What is sin ? 'Tis the bold defiance
Of the God who gave us breath ;
Daring heart-and-hand alliance
With His foe in deeds of death :
'Tis the heart in alienation,
With its streams of hate and gall ;
But rejecting His salvation
Is the crowning sin of all.

1 John iii. 8; John xv. 22-24.

What is love ? See love’s expression
In the Son, the sent of God,—
For our guilt and deep transgression
Shedding His atoning blood,
To redeem from condemnation
Those whose lot was death and hell,
And to give, with full salvation,
Endless life with Him to dwell.

1 John iv. 10.

What's believing? 'Tis submission
To the God of love and grace;
'Tis to own our true condition,
And to take the sinner's place;
'Tis to bow the soul before Him,
And to look to Christ, His Son;
'Tis to worship and adore Him,
Owning thus what grace hath done.

Rom. x. 8-17.

THE PALSIED MAN.

(Read MARK ii. 1-12.)

IT is a fact no less sorrowful than true, that man by nature knows not his utter helplessness in the sight of God, and consequently fails to appreciate God's unbounded love in giving His only-begotten Son to die for the ungodly, even while they were "without strength." When a soul is in any measure conscious of the necessity of righteousness in order to appear before God, the first thought almost invariably is, that such righteousness must be wrought out by doing good works, keeping the commandments of the law, or obeying the precepts of the gospel; not knowing that poor fallen human nature is incapable of doing anything which can be acceptable to God, nor the force of that Scripture, "they that are in the flesh cannot please God." (Romans viii. 8.)

The case of the man who was sick of the palsy, as recorded by the Evangelists, beautifully illustrates this truth, and also exemplifies the way in which the Lord meets the necessity of the poor helpless sinner.

A palsied man, who is so prostrate, that he is "borne

of feur," is brought unto Jesus, and let down on a bed or couch before Him ; just a picture of man as a sinner, altogether incapable, so to speak, of moving hand or foot towards God. There he is, completely powerless, lying before Jesus, who though found in fashion as a man, is the "the mighty God." "The Saviour of the world," and also "the power of God, and the wisdom of God." And what is the first act of this great and gracious One ? Does He comply with the desire of those who bring the man to Him, by communicating strength to his paralysed limbs ? He does indeed, in due time ; but He *first* surprises all who hear Him, by saying to the sick of the palsy, "*Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.*" The man is brought for help and healing, but Jesus speaks of "forgiveness of sins." He knows what is in man, and what man is. He penetrates beneath the surface to the source. "All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." (Heb. iv. 13.) He knows that the cause of man's helplessness and misery is SIN, that root of all bitterness. To put away sin He came into the world, He shed His precious blood, He died upon the cross. He put it away, root and branch, "by the sacrifice of HIMSELF." (Heb. ix. 26); and having finished the work which God gave Him to do, He is now seated "on the right hand of the Majesty on high." (Heb. i. 3.) Hence, in the case of the poor paralytic, the Lord goes at once to the root of the disease, and pronounces with divine authority the forgiveness of his sins ; and then, *and not till then*, does He give strength to his fixed and helpless limbs to rise up and walk.

Dear reader, do you know the forgiveness of *your* sins, through the precious blood of Christ? or are you seeking to be justified by works? The word of God, which is truth, declares that we cannot be justified before God by works; but that we are poor, helpless, vile sinners, who can do nothing towards saving ourselves. A sinner has neither the strength, nor the will, to walk in the ways of God and to serve Him, while he remains unreconciled to Him, through not believing the record concerning His Son; but when, through grace, he believes in Christ, as the One who, "when we were yet *without strength*, in due time died for the ungodly" (Rom. v. 6), he is saved with a present and everlasting salvation: and then, with this salvation is given power, through the Holy Spirit leading the soul to abide in Christ, the source and secret of all strength; to walk in the ways of the Lord "unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work." (Col. i. 10.) So that good works are the fruits of faith in Christ; but until God's record concerning His Son is believed, there can be no fruit borne to God; for "*without faith it is impossible to please Him.*" (Heb. xi. 6.)

Thus in the instance before us, the Lord having made known to the poor man, the forgiveness of his sins, *adds* the gift of strength, to enable him to arise, take up his bed and walk; and so he goes forth before them all, insomuch that they are all amazed, and glorify God. Yes! God *is* glorified in the holy, upright, intelligent and devoted walk of His saints, in newness of life; having created them in Christ Jesus unto good works, which He hath before ordained that they should walk in them. (Eph. ii. 10, &c.)

But the first point for the poor, powerless sinner to have settled in his conscience before God, is, the forgiveness of his sins, through the knowledge of Him who "came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mark ii. 17); who "once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust" (1 Peter iii. 18); who "is the propitiation for the whole world" (1 John ii. 2); and who, as "the Lamb of God," hath taken away "the sin of the world." (John i. 29.) The eternal song of the redeemed is, "Unto HIM that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood." (Rev. i. 5.) May you be found among that countless and blessed company, through NOW believing in the name of the only-begotten Son of God. (John iii. 16, &c.)

A THOUGHT ON HEBREWS III. & IV.

PERSONS have spiritualized the rest here spoken of to something *present*. The rest here is future. "We which have believed do enter into rest." To be sure we shall. The sense of the passage is, we which believe are the enterers into rest,—we which hold fast the promise. Would you define the rest? No, I cannot; it is God's rest, therefore perfect and satisfying. But "to-day" we are called to "labour," "to enter in;" not that the rest is here to-day. He that is entered, etc., is an abstract thought; the rest, new creation rest. We are all in danger of slipping back, instead of going on; so the exhortation is always needed. "We are made partakers of Christ, *if*." (ver. 14.) This word "partakers" has misled many, because it

looks doubtful. It should be “fellows,” or “companions.” It cannot be “partakers;” for if we are partakers *we are*, and there is no “if” about it; but if I do so and so, I am made a fellow or companion of Christ. It is the same as Psalm xlv. 7. “If we hold” just comes to this—if you have life, you will hold fast. The highest Calvinist and lowest Arminian meet there.

THOUGHTS ON 1 JOHN II. 2.

“He is a propitiation.” (1 John ii. 2.) The thought is not necessarily of bearing sin here; it is rather the thought of blood upon the mercy-seat: bearing sin was the scape-goat. Both, of course, present Christ in different aspects. The mercy-seat is essentially the judgment-seat, where God sits in righteousness, *till* the blood is put there. Dealing with respect to where we are, and bringing up to God are two very different things. When the blood is there I go up. Favour towards persons in grace, another thing quite from bringing them in by blood. The throne is one of judgment *first*; it is mercy or favour *through* righteousness. Socinians might say one thing, they would never say the other.

Our coming to Christ for every sin is the brazen altar. *Brass* is judgment of sin according to man’s responsibility; so we read of Christ’s feet being like unto fine *brass*, when He walks in the midst of the candlesticks. *Gold* is generally God in divine righteousness—judging of everything according to the divine presence; so Christ was “gold tried in the fire.” We have

full atonement on the golden mercy-seat. The gospel brings down to us what Christ's work *did*. When we have received it, and know our places as priests, we go in.

Reconciliation must be according to *God's* character, in its aspect towards man who was to be brought *back*. Propitiation the aspect to God-ward. (Rom. iii. 25.) We make a difference between Christ going within the veil to present His blood, and its being rent for us to go in. *Then* I get resurrection. Our responsibility is according to the place we are in, in every variety of relationship—wife, child, servant, etc. The believer is responsible for another thing altogether, he is called to be an *imitator of God*. Of course, man's responsibility is as a sinner,—if Gentile; as a law-breaker, if Israelite. The cross meets all. Justified by blood, we are forgiven, and thus responsible to *Him* down here. Resurrection was limited to earth; ascension was needed to lead into heaven.

The existence of the temple is ignored in Hebrews, only the tabernacle is mentioned. The "holy" and "the holiest" are one *now*. "Let us draw near" shews plainly they were not *there*. Hebrews does not go beyond a certain point. It looks at a person walking in trial on earth, with a priest between him and God; a *very* different thing from being united to Him. In our imperfections, very blessed in its place. Ephesians takes us up *past* resurrection, perfect in heaven, by ascension. The burnt-offering is coming to God by death. God must be glorified about sin—voluntary offering for favour and acceptance. I do not come to *worship* with a sin-offering. When I come

to worship, I come with the sacrifice of a burnt-offering—the recognition of sin put away; for it must be according to righteousness. We do not come up as *sinners* to worship; I go up as a saint to worship. (Look at yourself before you go up, to be sure you go up rightly, with purged conscience, etc.) You do not come to worship either as *I*; you come to worship as *we*. It is as accepted in Christ that we worship.

Worshippers once purged have no more conscience of sins. When I look at myself, or into myself, of course I see my *flesh*. Does a Christian, then, ever cease to have the character of a sinner? Does Christ ever cease to be your Saviour? No. Then you never cease to be a sinner. So in a prayer meeting, it is all well and right to come confessing sin, and to seek grace, etc.; for you come there in your actual condition. But if you go to worship with sin on your conscience, though you have failed and omitted to confess and get a cleansed conscience, *when you go up to worship you take the place of those so gathered*. On his return to his own closet, such an one may be led by that very fact to judge himself, confess, etc.

In 1 John i. there are three characteristics of the Christian. 1st. In the light as God is in the light. 2nd. Having fellowship with all saints. 3rd. Cleansed from all sin.

What is fellowship? Having common thought with (of ?) the Father and the Son is fellowship. My place, my life, is in God's light. I have got into the light. Well, so, instead of going on in natural selfishness, *you* having got into the same standing as *I*, *we* have fellowship together—communion of thought, etc.

Whenever John speaks of *grace*, it is the Father and the Son. Grace can only come that way. When testing man, it is God. As to the difference between "whosoever" and "whatsoever," the first takes up the *individual*, the second the nature. The nature must live on the object. Priesthood has to do with *God*; advocacy has to do with *the Father*.

SHORT NOTES ON DANIEL.

No. 5.

CHAPTER iv. continues what happens to Nebuchadnezzar in the history of "the times of the Gentiles." The leaders throughout the whole period lose the knowledge of being set in relationship to God, giving Him up entirely, as far as their government is concerned, thus becoming as beasts. And also turn the greatness and power given them by God to their own aggrandizement, and as a means for gratifying pride. The result, consequently, is the loss of all moral relationship with God, and being brought merely to the level of that of the brute creation, who, though they may be more powerful, larger, and stronger than man, ever look down, and are occupied with the earth, having no other thought than the mere exercise of self-will.

Conscious recognition of God and submission to Him, on the other hand, is the true glory of man, and what should characterize us at all times. Wherever this is lost, we descend to carnal and earthly objects.

The great principle, then, of this chapter is, *the evil conduct of the Gentile power—pride, self-exalta-*

tion, consequent judgment, and then the final result. That after being deprived of the imperial power for a complete period of time, it learns God through the judgments executed (Psa. ix. 16), confesses Him, and is brought into blessing.

Nebuchadnezzar records himself how little the ways of God in the previous chapter had reached his heart. For the moment, doubtless, he had been struck by the display of divine power and wisdom (see iii. 29); it was but transitory. Here, however, it is not so. God, as we shall see at the close of the chapter, is fully acknowledged, and Nebuchadnezzar takes his true place before Him; learning it, though, through the judgments executed upon him, as the nations will at the close of this present scene. (Isa. xxvi. 9.)

In chapter iii. the testimony of God is by the deliverance of the faithful among His people. Here it is through judgment on the Gentiles, which has the effect of bringing them to confess Him in His true millennial character,—as the “Most High God,” possessor of heaven and earth. (See Gen. xiv. 19.)

Let us now look a little at the details. The king is at rest and at ease in his palace—sure precursor of failure; for how can any rightly be at rest in a scene where God is not owned? Impossible! “There remaineth therefore a rest.” “Let us labour to enter in:” “for he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His.” (Heb. iv.) Precious truth! Blessed reward to a path of toil and labour! The rest of God—our rest—our home! May the Lord deepen it in our hearts daily, lest any of us should begin to say to our souls, “Soul, thou hast

much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease;" for assuredly the moment we begin to find any satisfaction down here, we are outside of God's thoughts—and not walking in fellowship with Him, who has "provided some better thing for us" (Heb. xi.) than a rest in this world, even "a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

Nebuchadnezzar describes the dream himself (10-18), which none of the wise men could interpret. "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness." But how blessed to find Him ever the same faithful One! As in chapter ii., so here Daniel stands out from among all as the only one capable of interpreting the mind of God. In verses 20-22 we find him telling the king that this tree which he saw, and its attendant characteristics, were typical of the king himself in all his greatness and power. As such, the symbol of a tree is used in Scripture to represent the mighty ones of the earth—those who are capable of taking others under their protection—of power, dignity, and importance. (See Ezek. xxxi. 3.) In Nebuchadnezzar's case this was universal. Hence we get "one tree," "its top reached to heaven, and its sight to the end of all the earth." (v. 11.)

While all found shelter under it, in the night a watcher and a holy one descending from heaven cut the tree down, leaving but the stump, bound with brass and iron, to be wet with the dew of heaven, and to have its portion with the beasts of the earth till seven times pass over it.

Daniel describes this "watcher" as being the inter-

vention of the power of the Most High—by providential agency it may be; for through such means God now acts; angels or men may be His instruments. In Matt. xiii. it is the angels who bind the tares in bundles ready to be burned.

But it is merely destruction for a time that is here spoken of. The stump is left; its glory is gone, it is true; but the roots are still in the ground, ready to shoot out when the time comes, and protected by divine providence (the band of brass and iron), as a stay in the midst of the anarchy, that would surely have arisen and overspread the earth.

All this comes to pass, spite of Daniel's exhortation (*v.* 27) to the king to alter his conduct. At the end of twelve months, as he walked in his palace, he ascribes to himself all the greatness and power of his kingdom; but, while the words are yet in his mouth, a voice sounds from heaven, and that same hour he is driven forth from men, and eats grass like an ox. (*v.* 33.)

“God is not mocked.” As surely as man exalts himself, so surely does judgment follow. And what has been thus true of him individually, is, as we have seen, morally true of the Gentile powers as a whole; all thought of God is gone, and they are left for a time without intelligence of Him. The great essential difference between a man and a beast is gone. At the end of days he lifts up his eyes to heaven, the first sign of returning intelligence; for a beast ever looks downward, and is occupied with the earth alone. But he now takes his true place among men; his understanding returns to him, and he bows before

God, whom he blesses as the Most High God, the name by which He is known as possessor of heaven and earth. Hence it is always used in the prophets and psalms with reference to the time when there will no longer be a chasm as now exists, but complete union between the two.

Of the blessings consequent on these judgments we have no mention here; but the facts are very solemn. Daniel is merely occupied with the various phases, which the power that led his people captive goes through; to which we do well to take heed, so that, while obeying the powers that be, we may walk not only outside of, but above them, knowing that God has provided for us "a better country, that is, an heavenly."

ENCOURAGEMENT AND WARNING.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS.

(John xiv. 12-14; James iv. 7; 1 Peter v. 8, 9; John xi. 39-44; Rev. iii. 16.)

IN a day like this, when so many are morbidly occupied with the low condition of saints, and weakness of testimony, it is well to look up and consider the almighty power and changeless love of our God. It was when David had been acting very badly, and the people of Israel had widely departed from Jehovah, when all human resources had utterly failed, we are told that "David encouraged himself in the Lord his God." Jehovah was *his* God. This he knew; and reckoning upon His arm of strength, and His abundant mercy, when despair was filling every one else, "David encouraged himself in the Lord his God." Nor was it

in vain. David's God abundantly responded to David's trust. The sequel tells us how largely God honoured the faith of His poor failing servant. And is God changed? Are His resources less than they were? Or is He less willing to be found *now* of His servants who truly seek Him than He was *then*? We know it is not so.

In a later day, when the apostle Paul was leaving the much-loved saints of Ephesus, and saw the terrible flood of evil that was coming in upon them, did he not say, "I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace"? To be sure he did; for where else can those look, who desire to be true to Christ, than to the living and true God? And surely the word, which tells us of the sufficiency of His grace, is able to encourage and strengthen our hearts in the most trying and failing circumstances; for,

"Though all things change, He changeth not;
He ne'er forgets, though oft forgot;
His love's unchangeably the same,
And as enduring as His name."

And so now. Christians have deeply failed we know. The manifest current of things around is to exalt man, and make little of Christ. The candlestick has been shattered. The living stones of the Church of God are found scattered here and there. Its manifested unity is gone, and, so far as we gather from Scripture, never again to be re-constructed on earth. Such is the present ruin. Nevertheless God abideth faithful. He cannot deny Himself. With Him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. His word, which endureth for ever, is still with us. The Holy Ghost, the Com-

forter, who is in us, abides with us for ever. Jesus, the Head of "the body," and "Son over His own house," our life, righteousness, and High Priest in God's presence, is as much *for us as ever*; for He is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." He has given us plain directions in His word for the present time, and abundant encouragement for our poor hearts in Himself, constantly bidding us to look away from difficulties and felt need to Himself. "Verily, verily," said Jesus, "I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to the Father." Observe, 1st. That the Lord is here addressing *believers*, and says, "He that believeth," he that exercises faith in Me. It is one thing to be a believer, it is another to be a believing believer—hanging on Christ, cleaving to Him, drawing from Him, expecting from Him. Mark, then, it is "he that *believeth*." On another occasion we are told, that when the Lord "saw their *faith*" He gave the blessing; and again we read that, in another place, "He did not many mighty works there, because of their *unbelief*." O the mighty power of faith!—looking off man, off circumstances, off self, and simply taking hold of the almighty and grace of our Lord Jesus, relying on His strength, and wisdom, and grace. Thus we see that the blessing is promised to him that *believeth*. 2nd. The result promised is, "The works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do." How these wondrous words raise our expectations! How they silence unbelief, and bid us cleave unto the Lord with full purpose of heart! 3rd. The reason given is

not because of our faithfulness, our worthiness, our ability, but because Jesus is at God's right hand—"because I go to the Father." Only let us look to Him, who has sent down the Holy Ghost, who has all power in heaven and in earth, and reckon upon Him, whatever be the difficulties or need, and we shall surely prove that His grace is sufficient for us, that His strength is made perfect in weakness, and that He is able to do above all that we ask or think.

But with the abundant encouragements of Scripture there are many warnings; and we need to watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation. Satan is a mighty foe. Few seem to believe it. We are told that he is *our adversary*, and that he walks about, as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. These are solemn words, and are addressed to Christians. Let us think of these things. He lays his snares. Satan's aim is always to get us to dishonour Christ, in doctrine or practice. May we not yield to his devices. He is a wily enemy, and can transform himself into an angel of light. But if God be for us, who can be against us? We are to *resist* the devil. How? By steadfastness in the faith—looking up *believingly* to Jesus, who is gone to the Father. And what then? Satan will flee from us. We are to beware, then, of this mighty foe, and we are commanded to resist him.

We must also beware of carnal reasoning and unbelief. It was the *purpose* of Jesus to raise up Lazarus. It was also His *will* to associate His saints with Himself in connection with this mighty work. Therefore "Jesus said, Take ye away the stone." But, instead of willing obedience to the Lord's word, there

was unbelief and carnal reasoning. *Unbelief* is very clever at *reasoning*. "By this time he stinketh," said one; as much as to say, "It is no use now to think of his being restored to life; it is too late." But the Lord suspends His working till the stone is removed. He reproves this *unbelief* by saying, "Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe thou shouldst see the glory of God?" Martha had forgotten the Lord's word, and began to reason about the matter. This is unbelief. Hence the Lord's work was hindered. He must have a believing vessel to use; for no other gives Him the glory. Faith always acts on God's word. The Master's reproof however is heeded. It seemed to quicken faith; for we are told, "*Then* they took away the stone," and this was followed by the accomplishment of the Lord's purpose in raising Lazarus from the dead. If we are cleaving to the Lord, and to His word, we shall readily obey His voice, and not hinder His work by unbelief.

Indifferentism, too, which is a marked feature of these days, must be carefully watched against, and prayed against. The surrounding religious atmosphere easily draws into its lukewarmness. It is the spirit of the world—present ease and prosperity to the exclusion of Christ; hence indifference to Christ's honour, Christ's truth, Christ's ways, Christ's interest, Christ's members. If Christ Himself has His right place in our *affections*, we cannot be indifferent to what affects Him. Of all things indifferentism seems most intolerable to Christ. He cannot, will not own such in His service. He said, "Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." Let us earnestly watch against indifferentism. If earthly

riches, or any other objects are valued more than Christ, the pure gold tried in the fire,—if what is due to Christ has not the first consideration with us, something else must have usurped His place in our hearts. If Christ be the object of our souls, and we are seeking to know Him, to serve Him, to please Him, we shall be encouraged ourselves, and able to help others to walk in His ways. May our loving coming Lord Jesus be more precious to our souls.

O Lord, the way, the truth, the life,
Henceforth let *unbelief* and strife
.Drop off like autumn leaves;
Henceforth, as privileged by Thee,
Simple and undistracted be
My soul which to Thee cleaves.

Let me *my feebleness recline*
On *that eternal love of Thine*,
And human thoughts forget;
Child-like attend what *Thou wilt say*,
Go forth and serve Thee while 'tis day,
Nor leave Thy sweet retreat.

MAN.

Psalm cxliv. 3.

LORD, what is man? the psalmist said,
And we repeat the cry;
What but a flower that rears its head,
To blossom, bloom, and die?

REVELATION I. 5, 6.

LORD, when with Thee we share the throne
Reserved for us above,
The brightest jewel in our crown
Will be Thy grace and love.

"QUITE HAPPY."

I HAVE been led to feel of late how much our loving Father delights to own direct, personal, affectionate appeals to the heart. What so precious to Him, whenever opportunity offers, as a simple, humble, but hearty confession of the preciousness there is in Jesus the Son of God? Reader—beloved of God!—let me urge this; for it is good to encourage each other by telling of His gracious ways.

A while ago, a young Scotch woman called on me in the way of business. She was tall and robust; but her pale look, her hectic flush, and bright eye, told at once that consumption had commenced its sure and rapid work. Besides, there was sadness on every feature. After learning that she was a stranger in our large city; that her father and mother were old and poor, in Scotland; and after advising her at once, if possible, to return to her home, she cast on me a most heart-rending look. The big tears rolled down her cheeks, and she asked, with such tones as could only proceed from a distressed, aching heart, "Do you think my sickness is a decline?" The instant reply was, "Oh, if you knew what a dear loving friend and Saviour the Lord Jesus is to just such as you, it would give such rest of heart that you would not be troubled a bit as to whether it is consumption or not." A few more such words, in the bustle of business, and we parted. Not hearing of her for some days, I concluded she had gone home to her parents; but a fortnight after I received a message that she was at the point of death. I found

her utterly prostrate from hemorrhage, and unable to speak a word; but a smile indicated that she knew me. I whispered a few precious scriptures about Jesus, and, to my surprise (oh unbelief!), I observed an expression of joy, as of a sunbeam, pass over her face. Next day the crisis was passed, and she greeted me with gladness. At once I said, “Are you happy?” “Oh yes; quite happy.” “How long have you been so?” “Nearly a fortnight.” “What made you happy?” “I can scarcely tell.” “Has any one been speaking or reading to you?” “No.” “Are your sins forgiven?” “Oh yes, all gone.” “What makes you so sure?” Her strength was gone; she simply breathed out, “Jesus! Jesus! ‘Whosoever believeth on Jesus.’”

She lingered for three months after that; and some of the happiest moments in my life were spent in witnessing her simple joy and her longing desire to be present with the Lord. And see how the Lord ever gives a word in season. She had been a domestic in a private hotel; and she told me that for months before I spoke to her, every day after her work was done she would retire to her room and weep by the hour at the thought of all her hopes being cut off, and death coming upon her so early. Oh, what an answer to all this did she find in the loving heart of Jesus!

Before her sickness she had sent her wages to support her aged parents. Now she was cast upon the Lord; and richly did He provide for her. A little before she fell asleep in Jesus, I asked if she had any special object for which we should pray. She replied, “I am sometimes troubled about the doctor’s bill, and how my

poor body will get buried when I am dead." I read some of the words of Jesus setting forth His care, and some of the promises of the Father to answer every request in the name of Jesus; and then we together told both those matters to Jesus. At my next visit, without any surprise (more than I can say of myself), she told me that two gentlemen had called on her from the hotel, to tell her not to be troubled about either the expenses of her funeral, the doctor's charges, or any expense attending her sickness, as the gentlemen on whom she formerly waited had arranged to meet it all.

And so they did. She fell asleep in Jesus; her precious dust was committed to the earth; and for all her need there was enough and to spare. I had never seen her before I spoke to her. One simple sentence, addressed directly to her heart about Jesus the Lord, was used to dispel the gloom of a broken-heart, to draw her sweetly to Himself, and to give her a taste of that living water after which she never thirsted again. Oh, how many times have I heard her exclaim, "Happy! happy as happy can be! Lord Jesus, come."

H.

GOOD NEWS FOR THE ANXIOUS;

OR, THE SECRET OF PRESENT PARDON, AS WELL AS OF PRESENT,
PERFECT, AND PERPETUAL PEACE WITH GOD.

THERE is nothing to DO ! for, being born dead,
You must needs have another to work in your stead :
And Christ Jesus, in Calvary's terrible hour,
HAS DONE all the work in such marvellous power,
That, raised from the dead, He now offers to YOU
Life! Pardon! Salvation! and NOTHING to DO ! [SINS,
No! nothing to do TILL YOU'RE SAVED FROM YOUR
When the power of doing good ONLY BEGINS.

TAKE GOD AT HIS WORD.

It is evident, therefore, that if you **TAKE GOD AT HIS WORD**, your sins, however many, "**ARE FORGIVEN**."—See 1 JOHN ii. 12.

CHRIST JESUS, as Son of man, *having* "once" *settled*, with His own life's blood, the question of *sin*, the reader is entreated to see whether he has *settled* the question of *his own soul's salvation* by "only" (Mark v. 36) believing the record that God has given of His Son (see 1 John v. 11),* and *then* letting his life, words, and habits show to all that Christ is in his heart, not only "the" (Col. i. 27) hope of glory, but the *certainty* of acceptance with God.

STRANGE FIRE & THE FIRE FROM HEAVEN;
OR, MAN'S THOUGHTS AND GOD'S THOUGHTS OF CHRIST.

(2 CHRON. vii. 1-10.)

HUMAN thoughts concerning Christ and His sacrificial work are at the best poor. Man can think of the crucifixion as an historical fact, and write and speak of the nails that pierced His hands and feet, of the thorny crown, and other *external* circumstances connected with His death; and come to his own conclusion too as to the worth of that sacrifice. In fact, the gigantic christendom round about us is built up mainly on *man's* estimate of Christ, and of things concerning Him. Like Nadab and Abihu, they have mingled strange fire with the incense which God commanded them not; and, like them, judgment and death must be the result. We are

* "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son."

told that "they died before the Lord;" and so must all those who are bringing the name of Christ and His work into use simply for present advantage and human exaltation; thus making ordinances and religious things their refuge, or relying upon the false foundation of associating man's opinions and his actions with the name of Christ, instead of relying only on Christ Himself and His infinitely efficacious work. Such is "strange fire;" it is not according to God's mind; it does not give Him the glory. It is man's religiousness; and the end of these things is death. (Lev. x. 1-3.)

It was not so, however, in Solomon's day, when he dedicated the house of the Lord. (See 2 Chron. vii. 1-10.) We do not find "strange fire" offered; but "the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices." We see God here, and His actings in relation to the sacrifice. This is what the faith of a Spirit-taught, sin-convicted soul specially beholds in the cross of Christ. They are not ignorant of the external facts of the crucifixion; but until they see God acting in the scene, until they there see God dealing with His own Son as the sin-bearer, they find no real ground of peace and rest. In the cross of Christ faith sees the invisible God searching the victim, trying and estimating its worth by the fire of His uncompromising holiness, and condemning sin in the flesh. The cross of Calvary tells us of an unblemished One who was in Himself infinitely acceptable to God, who fully glorified God in regard to our sins, and put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. It is God's estimate of the death of Christ, and nothing else, that establishes our souls in peace before Him. The resur-

rection, ascension, and glorification of Christ, shew us the infinite acceptability, the savour of rest, of that offering in the sight of God, and all combine to tell us that our security is built upon divine righteousness and truth.

If, then, we would have the joy of this immoveable security before God, we must be having God's thoughts of "Jesus Christ and Him crucified;" for God has so estimated the priceless value of that finished work on the cross as to raise Him up from the dead, and give us life, righteousness, and completeness in Him. God, we know, has counted that blessed One, who humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, worthy of the highest possible exaltation. It is God who tells us that we are "now justified by His blood," and who gives us fullest liberty to come into the holiest of all.

Just, then, as we are seeing God's dealing with Jesus His own Son upon the tree, and learning His mind from His word and by His Spirit—His estimate of the infinite perfections of that one offering which was once offered—will our hearts be set at liberty, and established in unquestionable security before God. God hath reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ.

Next observe that the sacrifices having been consumed with fire from heaven, glory followed. We are told that "the glory of the Lord filled the house." And does not this teach us what a sure title to glory the blood of the cross is? There is a most blessed connection between "the sacrifice" and "the glory." Let us well consider this. The death of Christ, like a mighty lever, gives the one who believes title to

the very glory of God. Like the rent veil, it removes every obstacle to going at once into God's presence. Glory must follow. We are at this moment between the cross and the glory, with liberty to enter into the holiest by faith. On no other ground whatever could we enter into the cloudless, holy presence of God, but that "Christ died for our sins," according to the Scriptures, and that "He was raised again from the dead by the glory of the Father." We are therefore told, that "the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house." (v. 1.) No wonder then that we so often sing,

"O Lord, we adore thee,
For thou hast redeemed us;
Our title to glory
We read in thy blood."

Is it not most blessed to see this connection between the sacrifice and the glory? How clearly it shews us that we owe all our blessings to the blood of Christ, and that in the glory itself we shall be so deeply conscious of it as to be for ever rejoicing in the infinite value of that blood, and giving unceasing glory to God and the Lamb.

Nothing so really humbles us as the sense of what God has wrought for us in Christ. It leaves no room for self-exaltation. It is a completed work. We are "become the righteousness of God in Him." This bows the heart before God to praise and give thanks. We are therefore told, that "when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down from heaven, and the glory of the Lord filled the house, *they bowed them-*

selves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the Lord, saying, For He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever." (v. 3.) It is then being in communion with God's mind as to the glories of Christ, and the unsearchable value of His work on the cross, that the heart is really emptied of self and earth, and filled with praise and gratitude to God. We are taken up with God, and delight to tell God what He is. This is worship.

Devotedness too will be connected with it; for the affections and desires of the heart are stirred by such wondrous mercy; and purposes of soul are formed according to the will of God. Hence this inspired narrative next tells us, that "THEN," yes, "*then* the king and all the people offered sacrifices before the Lord." (v. 4.) How is it that in the present day many Christians feel it so difficult to yield themselves and their substance to the Lord? The answer is plain. It is because Christ is so little understood,—God's estimate of Him so feebly apprehended—His perfections not known. Our ignorance of Christ is great, and very culpable. When God's revelation of the glories of His beloved Son is really known, and the infinite acceptability of His work received; when the blessed reality of being in Christ is laid hold of, our nearness to God in Him apprehended, the all-satisfying portion He is, and His all-sufficiency for us under all circumstances *known*; then the affections of our hearts are roused, and our energies so drawn forth that we cry out,—

"Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my *soul*, my *life*, my *ALL*."

We are further told, that the people were "glad

and merry in heart." (*v. 10.*) And why? Because of "the goodness that the Lord had shewed unto David, and to Solomon, and to Israel His people." I ask, then, in conclusion, can we fail to learn from these lessons that our present happiness, devotedness, and worship all owe their source to God as He has revealed Himself in Christ? Learning God's estimate of Christ in His presence, in all that He is to us and has done for us, we cannot but be moved to readiness of heart and purpose to associate ourselves with Him in a world that still rejects Him, and most truly feel that His interests are our interests, His joy our joy, and that what grieves and dishonours Him also grieves and dishonours us.

GRACE ABOUNDING.

Jesus came, a homeless stranger,
To the land He loved of old,
Lay an infant in the manger,
Ere His kingly claims were told :
 Grace abounding
We in all His ways behold.

Jesus dwelt a pilgrim lowly
Three and thirty years on earth,
Worked and wept, devoted wholly
To His Father from His birth :
 Grace abounding
Came by Him in time of death.

Jesus died, by sinners taken,
Hated, crucified, and slain ;
Earth was to her centre shaken,
Viewing her Creator's pain :
 Grace abounding!
Lo! the Saviour lives again !

Jesus rose, and God's salvation
 Bears the signet-seal of blood,
 Through the holy incarnation
 Of the Servant-Son of God :
 Grace abounding
 Reigns, through righteousness made good.

Jesus came and dwelt a stranger
 In a rebel-world of sin ;
 Knowing our eternal danger,
 Jesus died, our souls to win :
 Grace abounding !
 Jesus lives, and we in Him !

JESUS OUR HIDING-PLACE.

ISAIAH xxxii. 2.

THE perfect humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ is a truth of the most precious import to the believer. Encompassed with difficulties, wants, trials; exposed to dangers of all kinds; he needs One who is not only all-powerful to help, but also most tenderly merciful and able to sympathize with him in his weakness and distress; and such an One he finds in the ever blessed Son of God. Made of the seed of David according to the flesh, the Holy One of God trod this dreary wilderness as one who had not where to lay His head, a stranger and a pilgrim in the world that knew Him not, though He had created all things; and this shewed more than all beside how every thing was lapsed and gone from Him—the fact that He, the Blessed One, had no home here. It was indeed a *visit* to this world the Saviour made, a visit for a season. He is gone. He is not here now; for He is risen—returned to heaven, the heaven from which He came. This makes the world a wilderness for those who know and love Him;

for His presence only can give rest and satisfaction to their hearts. As long as I am upon earth I have to say,

“Absent from Him I roam;”

and hence the longing desire of every heaven-born soul to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better. Not that the Scripture does not give a hope of His return. It does. But my hope, as a Christian, is to be *in heaven*, not earth; and though I shall rejoice hereafter to see this world brought under the dominion of its rightful Lord, I am only hoping *now* to leave it, to go to Him who made it, and who lives in heaven as man—the man Christ Jesus. He is the hiding-place. He *was* the hiding-place for me when, a poor sinner, trembling under the load of guilt and misery that oppressed me, I fled to His cross. I remember it very well. I saw Him dying on the tree for me. I found relief in His presence, in the precious blood which He once shed. He redeemed me thus, scattered the terrors of a guilty conscience by His light, and gave me peace. I have to walk the desert now by confidence in that same Jesus. “A man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest.” Yes, you say, by-and-by, when a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. I grant it you. I am glad to think so. I weaken not in any measure the blessed hope of the future literal fulfilment of prophecy. But I say the Christ I know *has been* and *is* a hiding-place, a covert from the tempest. You say He is not on the cross now, nor in humiliation. I know it. I am glad of it. I know He is in heaven, and looks on me. I know there is not a sharp blast of

this wild desert that He cannot check or hide me from; but for all that I would not stay where I am so exposed. I want to go to Him. I say, Lord, take me; come and take me soon. I think sometimes there are things worth waiting for—flowers in the desert that give sweetness, and yield honey too. But ah! the thorn springs up; the brier of the wilderness says, "This is not your rest." You have no home here. Away! And I look up, and I see that it is so. "Earth is a desert drear," a dry place, a thirsty land! Whence can refreshment come? From Jesus. He is the fountain of living water. He alone. "As *rivers* of water in a dry place." The smitten Rock He once was. The Rock was smitten, and the water flowed. "He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." This was His word on earth. He took the place of the Rock in the wilderness. That Rock was Christ, the apostle tells us. And it never ceased to give its streams as oft as they were wanted. Oh, if Jesus were not living, where would His poor people be? But He is the Living One; and because He lives, they live. They are a feeble flock, a lowly flock. They lie hid in the valleys. Meek and lowly is their character, like His who lived and died for them. As the shadow of a great, a heavy Rock to them is He, the Beloved of their souls. Shelter and shadow is He to them. When the fierce heat would beat upon their heads, He tempers it. When the journey is too great for them, He takes them in His arms and carries them, or bids them lie down to rest. Sometimes He strengthens them with meat convenient for them. Then again He lets

them know how weak they are, how little able to conduct themselves, or win a step on the heavenward road. “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit,” then He says. And is it not so? Surely yes. And must we learn our utter weakness, and His strength? our utter nothingness, and His all-sufficiency? Yes, we must. His grace is all in all, from first to last. His love is perfect, infinite. And it is joy to know, that while we worship Him who is our all, God blessed for ever, we know Him as a hiding-place from the wind, a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great Rock in a weary land. Thus we know Jesus now, as meeting us in our wilderness needs; but we wait for His coming again to take us *out* of the wilderness, that we may be for ever with Him where He is.

“I AM JESUS.”

Acts ix. 10-15.

One thing that gives intense interest to this Scripture is, that the Lord Himself is acting in it. We are prone, in thinking of the Lord’s work, or even in witnessing it, to be taken up with what the visible actors are about,—what Peter, or John, or Philip, or Stephen may be doing,—what *this* preacher or *that* gift may be occupied in; and surely these things have their interest, and *ought*, in the souls of God’s people. The Holy Spirit acts *by* men on earth as well as *in* them, and therefore it can never be wrong for Christian people to love, help, and pray for those whom He is using for good, and this irrespective of personal likes or dislikes. I must be very narrow-thoughted if I do not see that

God is working in various spheres, and by different individuals, who would not, perhaps, act together. I am speaking of things *as they are*. In the beginning of the history, in the early chapters of this book, things were blessedly as they *ought to be*—“all with one accord in one place,” as we get at the opening of the second. They had previously waited together in the upper room, continuing with one accord in prayer and supplication—earnest of coming blessing surely, which the day of Pentecost made good. And then the effect of the Holy Ghost in power among them was to make them of one heart and of one soul, caring for each other as members of one common family—the new family formed by the faith and hope of the gospel. From thence testimony flowed; and though there was soon a dispersion—a scattering if you will—yet it was *not in heart*. The scattered disciples preached the gospel; diffused with joy the tidings of a crucified and risen Lord; knew He was in heaven; had their hearts filled with Him; loved to recognize one another as having interests which the world around knew not of; as being, in short, a peculiar people—in the world, and not *of* it. Their mission was to tell of Jesus, to make known His love. Now it is the *activities* of the Spirit of God, if I may use the expression, that we find in the opening chapters of this book, His working in these dear people as the witness of Jesus, and particularly by some of them, who were *full* of the Holy Ghost. (iv. 8, vii. 55.) Jesus had gone into heaven; they had spoken of Him as being there; their testimony was a testimony to Him *as* being there; but now a great blow is being aimed at the Church—a fierce

persecution arises; and what is so intensely interesting is, that at this crisis the Lord Jesus Himself appears in the work. No servant now. The Lord of all will meet the persecution. “I am Jesus.” This is something worth notice. His interest in all that concerns His sheep, His feeble flock, is not a whit less deep in heaven than when He suffered for them on the cross. (Love in God is eternal, unchangeable; ever fresh, and ever free. It is a living love, the same to-day as yesterday, the same for ever.) He will superintend the case of Saul of Tarsus Himself; and in thus doing, having laid him low, He speaks to Ananias in a vision. This is what I would notice. He calls Him by name. *Jesus* speaks. O blessed communication! The disciple hears and answers. The sheep knows the Shepherd’s voice. The communication is most interesting; for the Lord tells His disciple all that was happening in another house, and to another soul. He lets him know it as friend communicates to friend. He tells him that which interests himself: “Behold, he prayeth.” And is it not a wondrous consolation this, that the Lord is interested in a poor stricken sinner’s prayer? How little do we read His heart! But look again. The servant speaks to Him,—tells out his fear,—tells his simple tale as freely as he would to his fellow-man. And this is blessed surely! The soul that knows the Lord can tell Him *all things*. Here is complaint as well as fear. “This man” is an object of dread to Ananias. He has done evil—evil to the saints—*thy* saints. What a terrible thing, such an accusation going up from one afflicted soul against another! But who does it go up to? Does it not

remind you of Elijah, on another occasion (1 Kings xix.), his face in his mantle, and his heart poured out to God in intercession *against* Israel? “Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and dragged down thine altars; and I am left alone; and they seek my life, to take it away.” Who, I say, does it go up to? *God*, the *blessed God!* Does *He* not see it all? He does. But what is He looking at? The faithful remnant. “Yet have I left me seven thousand in Israel that have *not* bowed the knee to Baal.” God is patient. “You, my servant, must have patience too. Your path is through the wilderness, and thence to heaven.” And if in that day there was light amidst the darkness, by the revelation of God, is it not so still? If the cloud of sorrow was so thick upon the servant’s eyes that he could see only the evil and the ruin—if he needed the voice of the Lord Himself to remind him or to tell him of the remnant in his day, may it not be still the same? Is Ananias heeded when he tells his tale? He is. But he has to learn that the thoughts of a risen and a glorified Lord Jesus are higher far than his thoughts; that let the swelling wave rise high and furious as it will below, the Lord who dwelleth on high is mightier; and not only so, but “mercy rejoiceth against judgment” (James ii.); or, as the margin has it, *glorieth* against judgment. “Go thy way; for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name.” Ah, wondrous love and grace! Pattern of all long-suffering! Who would not praise, and bless, and magnify this gracious, heavenly Lord Jesus! All authority and power, all might is His. “Go thy way” is His commandment. Do the gracious

work I give thee; but His love, His condescension, tells the secret of His heart—"He is a chosen vessel unto me." No fear now, Ananias; the service is not terrible *now*. Blessed be His holy name! Who would not fear Him! Yea, who would not love Him too—the Lord, the restorer of all!

EXTRACT OF AN ADDRESS OF A CONVERTED JEW TO THE JEWS OF COCHIN.

"I AM one of your brethren, a child of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I believe in Moses and the prophets, who predicted that Seed of Abraham by whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed, and who shall be the glory of the children of Israel; who came in the fulness of time, and was brought as a Lamb to the slaughter for the iniquities of His people; who was cut off, but not for Himself; who was pierced for our iniquities, and of whom it was said, 'Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, against the man that is my fellow.' Twenty years are now passed since I found Him to be my Saviour; and now for more than twelve years I have preached Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of David, as the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. And this is the sin which Israel sinneth until now: that they do not believe in Jesus of Nazareth, who was that angel in the wilderness who accompanied the children of Israel when they went out of Egypt; to whom, too, the Lord God shall give the throne of His father David; and who shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever. He, Jesus Christ, shall be the ruler in Israel; He who came out of Bethlehem Ephratah."

**"THE MIND WHICH WAS IN CHRIST
JESUS."**

"Meek and lowly in heart;" "moved with compassion;" "grieved with the hardness of their hearts;" "gracious words out of His mouth;" "pleased not Himself;" "loved righteousness, hated iniquity;" "not ashamed to call (us) brethren;" "merciful and faithful;" "suffered being tempted;" "faithful to Him that appointed Him;" "touched with the feeling of our infirmities;" "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners;" "for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame;" "endured contradiction of sinners against himself;" "gracious." "When He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered He threatened not, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." I beseech you, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, "let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

(Matt. xi.; Matt. xiv.; Mark iii.; Luke iv.; Rom. xv.; Heb. i. ii. iii. iv. vii. xii. xiii.; 1 Peter ii.)

A NEW CREATION.

*In spite of all, it still is perfect peace,
And shall be in obedience to Thy word,
My loving Guide! my God and Comforter!
For "I have kept the faith,"—am walking still
Upon the water of Thy living Word;
And hence I know for certain the "old things"—
Self, sins, and nature, ALL "are passed away,"
Forgiven—aye, forgotten; and this, too,
In thorough harmony, consistently,
With all Thine attributes, Most Holy God!
"All things are NEW!"*

A CONTRAST.

A wondrous contrast in myself I see—
 As black as sin can make me by the fall,
As fair as Jesus is in God's account:
 For—God be praised!—it is not what I know,
 But what the Father thinks, and sees, and knows
 Of the exceeding beauties of His Son;
 That's my exceeding comfort, joy, and rest,
 In spite of all!

“AS HE IS, SO ARE WE IN THIS WORLD.”

For Thou hast reconciled us to Thyself;
Hast quickened us anew;
Hast raised us up; hast seated us, and all
 Together with the Christ, and so it is Thou say'st,
 (So well are we identified with Him,)
 That “as He is, so are we in this world.”
Of course we are in God's account;
 That's true in spite of all, and shall be too.

The enemy has only one point on which to attack us left open; and so his HOPE is, as well as all his endeavours, to shake, and so destroy, our confidence in God, His word, His thoughts, and His love.

SCRIPTURE QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

Q. Can you favour me with an explanation of Matthew ix. 14–18?—J. S. N.

A. The question of John's disciples, “Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, and thy disciples fast not?” opened the door for our blessed Lord to set before them their real condition, both as individuals and as a nation, and also to expose the folly of endeavouring to make themselves better by religiousness. Like the present time, it was not a question of *fasting*, but of *life*. It was not a point of *mending up* the natural man, or the nation, but of the new birth. “Ye must be born again.” Besides, how could the disciples of Jesus fast and mourn while He Himself was with them? Our Lord therefore replied, “Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the

Bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the Bridegroom shall be taken from them, and *then shall they fast.*" But men always prefer religiousness to Christ; they refuse God's testimony to their real condition, and try to patch up by redoubled efforts what God has condemned as utterly unclean, and incurably bad. The nation had revolted, and separated themselves from God by their sins. Jesus "came unto His own, and His own received Him not;" and, as He afterwards brought out, it would yet take to itself seven other spirits more wicked than the first, so that their last state would be worse than the first." (chap. xii. 45.) Their religiousness in fasting, &c. did not therefore meet the case. They were only trying to patch up the old garment, which the Lord knew to be threadbare, rotten, and unmendable. Patching therefore was in vain. Again, they might study Scripture theologically, and disseminate Bible instruction; but the vessel being corrupt, it was like putting new wine into old bottles, which would only end in destruction. Man must be born again. He does not need *education*, but *life*. The garment must be new. The bottle must be new. "Except a man be born again, He cannot see the kingdom of God." The thought of the Pharisees then, and the thought of many now is, to get into the kingdom of God without being born again of God's Spirit,—by some other means short of that "*eternal life*" which is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. The nation, which is now a rotten, laid-by garment, with all the patching of self-righteous rejectors of Christ only makes "*the rent worse.*" But a nation shall be born at once. Then, and not till then, shall "*Israel blossom, and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.*" (Is. xxvii. 6.)

Q. How do you understand that "*we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us?*" (Rom. viii. 37.)—A. B.

A. Does not this Scripture shew, that those who trust in the Lord Jesus not only get deliverance, but also much profit and blessing, and all through Him that loved us? When David, in deep distress, trusted in God, he not only recovered all, but had *so much more*, that he comforted and enriched others. (1 Sam. xxx. 1-26.) Again, when the enemies of Je-hoshaphat threatened to swallow him up, he trusted in God. He said, "*We know not what to do; but our eyes are upon thee.*" (2 Chron. xx. 12.) What was the result? Not only full deliverance, but very much spoil—"more than they could carry away."

THE TUNNEL AND THE PASS.

As I was starting from S—— the other day by the Great Western, the guard unlocked the door of the compartment in which I was seated and let in four working men, with their wallets and tools, travelling by a railway pass to G——.

At one of the stations our tickets were demanded for inspection, and to be notched by the officials. The guard's whistle was then replied to by the engine-driver, and on the train went.

When we were outside the station, I moved nearer my companions and said, "You are travelling by a railway pass, are you not?" "Yes," they answered. I asked if the pass would carry them to the end of their journey. "Yes." Then I remarked on the value of *another* kind of pass, viâ the cross and the sepulchre of Christ,—out of this world into another,—out of time into eternity,—a pass from here to yonder, where Christ is crowned with glory and honour, "at the right hand of God." Had either of them got *this* in their possession?

We had just come out of a long and dark tunnel, and not having any lights in our carriage, it seemed unusually dark and dreary. This led me to comment on the further importance of such a pass, the purchase of Christ's atoning blood, and the free *gift* of God to a poor sinner, which would be acknowledged all the way along, and be found by the traveller of the greatest moment when going through the dark tunnel of death and the grave, which was a-head of them. Could they

look through and see the bright light at the other end of such a tunnel *as this*? Did they know that line which is opened up beyond it by the resurrection and ascension of Jesus,—“a new and living way,” which leads up into the glory and the Father’s house? What a terminus! One of these men remarked that he had “heard something of this sort,” and another said he “must go and learn about it.”

I replied, “You did not tell the clerk when he wrote out your pass, and put it into your hand this morning, that you must first go and learn how to read before you used it. On the contrary, you are presenting it *solely* on the authority of the Great Western Company, with all the assurance that attaches to the pass, from the fact of your having had nothing to do with the filling it up. It is to frank you to the end of your journey, and whether you can read it or not has nothing to do with the matter. You produce the pass when required, and go forward; the inspector reads it.”

“Quite true,” said another of his companions; but he added, “We must go to a house of prayer, sir.” I replied, “Yes, but what for? Not to *get* your pass to the glory, but to praise Him through whose death it has been obtained. ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved’ *Faith in Him* puts it into your hand. You will then find how necessary prayer is for your daily walk as ‘a new creature in Christ.’”

Do you ask where you must go for this through ticket? Listen! You need not leave your seats in search of schoolmaster, minister, or priest; for “if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and

believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt *be saved.*" (Rom. x. 9.) Upon this one of the men said, "I see what it means. 'Tis just like my wife, when she has put my supper upon the table against I come home; 'tis for me to eat it."

Another, who had sat quietly in the corner, objected to this free grace of the gospel to the unconverted, and turned on me, saying "he liked people to be consistent," which led me to demand in what respect I had been inconsistent. In a loud voice he answered, "A man must *have* life before he can believe. What is the use of speaking to dead men?"

I quoted to him, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever *believeth* on Him should not perish, but have everlasting *life.*" Turning from him to the others, I continued, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to *save sinners,*" pressing it upon their acceptance as a word for *themselves*, and for *to-day.*

Again the objector said, "A man must have life before he can believe. How can he act life? Can a dead man hear?" I reminded him I had not said to his companions that they were to act life, for the obvious reason there must be life before they could do so, and show it outwardly. Could he not distinguish between the Spirit working by the word in a sinner, in order to *quicken to life*, through faith in Christ, and the possession of life, that the actings proper to one who is "born of God" might be manifested? Would he shake a man's confidence in the living God by throwing a doubt into his mind as to the finished work

of Christ for the one who believes? In reply to his question whether a dead man can hear; this was no business of mine. Reasoning as a man I should say, No; but knowing the power of God in Christ my answer would be, Yes; for I believe in Him who "quickeneth the dead," and " calleth things that are not as though they were."

In my turn I asked this man what were the "glad tidings" *he* had to present to his fellows, seeing he objected to mine? One of his companions took up the question, asking, "What harm has the gentleman done by telling us that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners?"

Of course I encouraged this man to accept "the faithful saying," and put it to the proof, as he had done the company's pass to-day. What is the right use of these Scriptures, if that which had been made was the wrong one? For whom were they intended, if not for sinners?

On leaving the carriage I shook them by the hand, telling the objector I had a word for him about the actings of this new life as *he* professed to have it. Paul says, "Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death: for to me to live is Christ." If he would take no less an example than Christ for the actings of life, he would find this to be a searching and humbling, though *blessed* occupation. And so we parted.

Reader, can you see yourself in the light of this narrative? Do you know where you are, and by what road you are travelling, and under whose pass? Are you determined to earn your own ticket, and refuse to

go “without money and without price”? Dare you try your own merit as the pass-word? or is it in the prevalence of that *only* “name given under heaven whereby we must be saved”? Are you waiting for more confidence from some good actions, or for deeper repentance upon your bad ones?

The elder brother, in Luke xv., never got into the father’s house: “he was angry, and would not go in.” *Self-righteousness* kept him out,—“neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment.” He would not enter on the footing of the prodigal, but upbraided the grace of a father’s heart, which triumphed over the wanderer as he said, “This my son was dead, and is alive again; was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.”

Are you outside the Father’s house with the elder brother upon your good deeds? or inside it with the prodigal on account of your bad ones, knowing that Christ in love to you made them His own upon the cross, and put them away for ever by His sufferings and death in your stead?

THE HUMAN HEART.

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.”
JEREMIAH xvii. 9.

THE heart of man is like a barren field,
And fruit to God was never known to yield;
Its choicest flowers are but cultured weeds,
While thorns and thistles are its native seeds:
Nay, more than this, there lies beneath the soil
Far worse than what appears, however vile;
For there lies buried, to the heart innate,
To God, and all His grace, a thorough hate.

“NOW.”

“THE world parseth away, and the lust thereof.” (1 John ii. 17.) The very scene in which we live and move is shifting, and all the pleasures men delight in are transient. “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.” Let us enquire, How much time can we call our own? How long is now to us? Let us place our hand upon our heart and find the answer. Hark! there is one throb; now there is silence! Can we say for certain, this heart shall beat again? No, we dare not. Then only the short interval of one heart-beat is ours, only that moment is our now. The world is vanity; we ourselves are uncertain of another moment’s existence here; eternity is at hand; soon the heart will throb for the last time, and then for ever and for ever all will be real and unchangeable.

We implore you, dear reader, to ponder the word, now. Too often you look indifferently, carelessly on this precious present moment which God gives you. You live as if this world was all reality and certainty, and eternity vanity and uncertainty; and you read God’s word, “Behold now the accepted time; behold now the day of salvation,” as if it were a future time, as to-morrow. Many thousands have done so before you, and so have *for ever* lost their opportunity, the “more convenient season.” Soon, if not to-day, you will say, “It is all reality now, all an eternal reality,” as you lift up your eyes in the place of torment, or as you gaze upon the glories of the Lord.

“Ah! it is all reality now! heaven real, the love of the Lord Jesus real, all real!” said a dying youth

yesterday to his parents. He had tried the world, and bitter had its deceptive vanities proved to him. He found the Lord, and oh, how sweet, how lasting was His love! “Mother,” he could say, “indeed I love you, for you have been a precious mother to me, but I love my precious Jesus more.” When the last hour of his short world-day came, and the vanity and vexation of life was nearly past, he fixed his large eyes earnestly upon her and said, “Mother, God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life,—EVERLASTING LIFE!” he almost shouted. Shortly after his spirit peacefully left his body, and was “with the Lord.”

At his special request we sang at his grave—

“For ever with the Lord!
Amen, so let it be!
Life from the dead is in that word;
'Tis immortality!”

Surely you own, dear reader, that it is all real now with him.

If this life is vanity, eternity is reality. If now you bear the load of sin lightly, it will weigh you down HEREAFTER. A dying believer lately answered the question, “Where are your sins?” by saying, “My sins are under the blood of Jesus.” Where, dear reader, are *your* sins? Each one is written down in God’s book; each one will be had in everlasting remembrance, unless all are blotted out in the blood. The vain world will give you a shroud and grave,—its gifts to kings and beggars,—but when your body lies beneath the sod, where will be your soul? In happy-

ness, if your sins are blotted out in the blood of Christ; in woe, if they are written in God's great book.

If you now mourn over your sins, if you now earnestly long for everlasting life, you may receive comfort from hearing how a dear youth in one of our London hospitals found peace. Often and often on seeing him, the tears filled his eyes as he said, “I should not mind dying if I only knew I was saved;” and when he was told month after month that all he had to do was simply to believe God, he would reply, “I cannot believe; my heart won't believe.” But at length light broke into his soul. By the Spirit's power he was enabled to believe in God's salvation, and then what joy beamed from his bright and happy face! so bright, so calm, though stamped by death's hand. Thus it was he said he found deliverance: “It was just as if I owed a great sum of money and had nothing to pay, and was too weak and ill to work out the debt, when some good man came and shewed me a receipt, saying, It is all paid. Jesus paid the debt of my sins in His own blood, and God now gives me the receipt.”

Before this year ends your eyes may be dim in death, or earnestly looking upon the Lord. Should the Lord come, how will He find you? Nay; how is it with you now?

“There is an hour when I must part
With all I hold most dear,
And life, with its best hopes, will then
As nothingness appear.

“There is an hour when I must look
On one eternity,
And nameless woe or blissful life
My endless portion be!”

Beloved fellow-Christian, may we have grace to use well our little but priceless now! May we be diligent in prayer and in labour, finding out perishing sinners and trembling sheep! Might we not give to our Lord some hours which now go in the service of earthly vanity? How have the first two months of this year been spent—more wisely or not than the last months of the year that is gone? Shall we heed the cry of misery from hospitals, from poor and needy homes, from desolate hearts in workhouses, from the neglected courts of the crowded city, or from the lonely cottage in the country? Let us one and all solemnly and prayerfully, in the presence of our Lord, in the light of eternity, ask ourselves, How are we using our NOW?

REMARKS ON MATTHEW XXIV. XXV.

No. 4.

CHAP. xxiv. 15-28.

The blessed Lord seems to have anticipated the difficulty many would find in understanding the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet; for He added, "whoso readeth let him understand." (v. 15.) But "the abomination" is defined; our Lord said, it is that "spoken of by Daniel the prophet." This makes it clear; for there it is spoken of as arising in the midst of the last or seventieth week, in connection with the man of sin, that wicked one who is yet to be revealed. "He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week, and *in the midst of the week* he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and

for the overspreading of *abominations* he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolator" [margin]. (Dan. ix. 27.) This takes us on to the *end of the age*—the completion of the seventieth week. Our Lord gives the faithful, too, instruction for that time. Those who are in Judea are admonished to flee to the mountains; and so imperative and urgent is the step (for the abomination will be hastened with such rapidity, and the hatred to the faithful be so intense), that the man who is on the housetop is not to come down to take anything out of his house; or if a man be in the fields, he is to flee as he is, and not to go to his home for his clothes. The Lord's tender heart cannot have the dreadful picture before Him without giving utterance to His sympathy with the faithful ones who are thus obedient to His word at that time. He sees what great pain and difficulty will be connected with those who are with child, and those who are carrying their infants, fleeing from the fiery persecution of this lawless one. The winter time, too, would increase the suffering; and a conscientious Jew (for such who fled would be) would feel limited to a sabbath day's journey, if the time for fleeing should occur on the seventh day. This deepest time of sorrow, too, which earth ever knew, the Lord refers to with deep emotion. "Then," said He, "shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." (v. 21.) Daniel, speaking of the same time, says, "there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time." He also refers to the remnant of Israel that

will be brought out of it; for he adds, “at that time *thy people* shall be delivered, every one that shall be written in the book.” (Dan. xii. 1.) Jeremiah says, “Alas! for that day is great, so that *none is like it*: it is even the time of *Jacob’s* trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.” (Jer. xxx. 7.) And God’s word will be fulfilled; for though the fiery persecution be unparalleled in earth’s history, and the rage of this lawless one and his associates so great as to threaten an entire extermination of the faithful, yet He who is able to deliver His own will restrain the wrath of man, and accomplish His own purposes. Jesus said, “Except those days should be shortened, there should no *flesh* be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened.” (v. 22.) Thus the elect, those whom Jehovah by the prophet calls “*Israel mine elect*,” will be saved out of it; like Noah saved in the flesh, or like the children in the furnace, sustained in the burning furnace without the smell of fire attaching to them, and saved out of it as men in *the flesh*, as we have just seen alluded to by our Lord’s words, “Except those days should be shortened, there should no *flesh* be saved; nevertheless for *the elect’s sake* those days shall be shortened.” Nothing can be clearer than the elect here being a people of Israel saved bodily out of this which is emphatically called “the time of *Jacob’s* trouble.”

But there is another point. There have been times of great trouble on the earth, and each may have been supposed by some to be this great tribulation. As we are taught, that there will be false Christs, false prophets, and great deceivers, who will work

signs and wonders, and deceive many, there is one thing that will keep these “elect” from being deceived: they will know that Christ’s coming will be open and visible, and not private. So here the blessed Lord admonishes them that if they hear it said that Christ is here or there, in the desert or in the secret chamber, they are not to believe it, and therefore not to go forth. Why? Because His coming will be public and manifested. Like an eagle pouncing upon a foul carcase, or like lightning flashing suddenly and vividly from east to west, so the coming of the Son of Man will be. As we are elsewhere told, “Behold He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him;” or as our Lord witnessed to the Jewish high priest, “Hereafter ye shall *see* the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” (Matt. xxvi. 64.) The nineteenth chapter of Revelation clearly shows us that when the Lord thus comes out of heaven in great power and glory, He will not be alone, but be followed by the armies of heaven. Yes, we shall be with Him then, having been previously caught up; for it is written, that “when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear *with Him* in glory.” (Col. iii. 4.)

THE ALL-SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST.

Notes of an Address from Mark viii. 10-28.

WHAT I find in every one’s history is this: that first he has to learn that Christ gave Himself for him, and next he has to learn that he must give up everything for Christ. Our history is that double thing; but in

one sense we may say the first is readily acquired, though it be a long time before you find that, as a thoroughly ruined one, Christ is absolutely for you. The day will come when we shall have nothing but Christ. In that moment of terror, when you find out the emptiness of everything, He is the one who in the darkness that surrounds you alone is for you.

In type you see it in Jonah. It was not that Jonah was not converted before, but he had to be brought into the depths, where no one but God could save him. First of all I have Him as the Saviour. To be devoted I must find that He is absolutely for me. Now when He taught Peter that in the 5th of Luke, how did he teach him—at what point? It was when the boat was full of fish—that most exciting moment to a fisherman—that Peter found himself in the presence of God good for nothing. “I am a sinful man, O Lord!” Look at that man, fallen down there at Jesus’ knees, he who had given his time and his boat to the Lord, like a religious man now who gives his time and his money for the spread of the Gospel. One knows what it is to have gone on in that floating way for years.

There is a moment in your history when you must be sensible of the thorough insufficiency of everything, and of the thorough sufficiency of Christ. These disciples, at the most trying moment for fishermen, brought their ships to land, and forsook all and followed Him.

What is a death-bed? How beautiful it is at times. It is simply that there you have a person saying, “I have tasted the insufficiency of everything,

but I have found the all-sufficiency of Christ." Does not your heart respond? The day is come, in that person's history, when Christ is found sufficient. But He *must* first be known by the soul, and this Peter's history declares.

There is a darker lesson we have to learn. We have to learn that there is death upon everything. If you consider the Scriptures, you will find it brought out in every history. The Gospels are the school; the Epistles set forth our standing. Christ is now teaching His disciples death and glory. The point is this, Is He sufficient for everything? He sighed deeply in His Spirit—He sighed deeply at the nation's unbelief.

"Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf." You cannot imagine anything more resourceless than their condition, without bread and in a ship upon the sea. What the Lord brings out is this—His own sufficiency. He does not make the bread a bit more, but He tests their faith. Am I sufficient for you when there is a dearth of everything? "I have made myself known to you in power, how is it that ye do not understand?" Do not be pained: mercies are very often given you that you may learn to do without them—that you may learn the Person who gave them, and then find Him sufficient. It is not the gifts that give a colour to Him, but it is He that gives a colour to the gifts. What has Jonah to learn? Not only that there is death in himself, but that there is death in everything here.

I have the two things to learn—life in the Son of God and death down here. Always bearing about in

the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." Do not shrink from it—do not be afraid: faith never looks at difficulty, but at the One who is sufficient for the difficulty. Men of faith do no end of rash things. Look at Moses. When he came down from the Mount he confronts 600,000 men as if they were nothing. He stands for God. He never thought of them; he never took into account the odds against him. He calculated on God only! The disciples have not rested upon Him. They ought to have shown skill about Him. What I mean by "skill" is this: it is not a question of mere power. "Skill" is power properly applied—faith's use of power. This is the difference between David and Jonathan: Jonathan might be the stronger man; David, the man of skill, is not afraid of Goliath. You will find in your own private history that you have to learn His sufficiency, and not to be a bit disheartened by what you see around—not a bit disheartened because there is no bread in the ship.

The turning point of my history here is, that as I am travelling through this scene I have to do with the risen Christ, no matter what the circumstances that may arise. Practically this is what comes out: I have no resources; I am not a bit disheartened; I have Christ. Like Paul, who could say before the greatest tribunal in the world "all men forsook me"—there was no bread in the ship: "notwithstanding the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear, and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion." (2 Tim. iv. 16, 17.)

Do not be disheartened. Do not do what people are always trying to do ; they are always trying to relieve themselves by change of circumstances. You will never reach a brighter point of strength than saying, "Blessed God, make me equal to it, make me rise above it;" instead of saying, "*alter* it, do *remove* this thing or that thing." The old era was that everything was weaker than man ; the new era is that man in Christ is greater than everything. If your child is ill, and you pray for its recovery, and it is given back to you, you have not the same knowledge of God as if you had risen superior to the trial. While I am resting in the Lord, let Him do what He will, Christ is sufficient—"there is no bread" is sufficient—nothing else is sufficient. It is not "resignation." That is a poor thing—only putting up with a thing because I cannot help it. "The man that walks by faith must be faithful"—nothing truer has been said. I believe if we are walking by faith, in simple dependance on Christ, nothing could be brighter than our path. There is only one path of life, and if you are walking by faith you are in it. If we have "skill," we shall not be like the sons of the prophets, bringing the wild gourds into the pot ; then death is brought into it.

God cannot demonstrate His love by giving you this thing or that thing. He demonstrates His love in glory, where your destitution is fully met. But, I say, practically do not shrink from it. Do not be afraid. We all have a pressure. It is not that I want you to be unfeeling about it. But there is all the difference between the ring of the soul that is dependent on mercies, and the soul that is learning to walk

according to God without mercies. Do you say, Oh, He would put me to too much trial! I reply, He loves me ten thousand times more than I love myself, and if you say otherwise you have not learnt salvation and the love of His heart.

I know what pressure is. What is it for? It is to bring me to Him, so that the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, may keep my heart and mind through Christ Jesus. Relief from the thing pressing may not be known, but you have the blessedness of Himself between your soul and the pressure, and the peace of God, that passeth all understanding, keeping your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

The Lord lead us to understand this side of our history as walking through the world. One's heart sometimes trembles seeing people making themselves so happy here. I say, "Ah, the gourd will die some day, and you will learn the lesson—death is upon every thing, and Christ is all-sufficient." It is no sorrow at all if you find that you have a better one in place of it all. I deny that Mary was not satisfied with the presence of Christ, when walking to the grave of Lazarus. You have to learn the sufficiency of Himself in the wretchedness of a scene like this, and then you will move on cheerfully and faithfully, to the praise of His name.

HEBREWS IX. 27, 28.

Both old and young the dart of death
Lays level with the dust;
Then, reader, while you yet have breath,
Make Christ alone your trust.

ONE STEP.

Acts ix. 6-16.

WHEN Saul of Tarsus, struck down on the road to Damascus, asked the question, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" the Lord told him one thing only—that is, He directed him only in *one step*. "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." I think this is important to remember. In seeking guidance how often it is that the soul is perplexed with a multitude of thoughts, whereas one thing only is needful, namely, *to know the next step*. When a child is learning to walk, it only takes one step at a time, and that totteringly and feebly, and even the most grown and steady walker must confine himself to the "one step" till the next is plainly before him. One step and listen. "It shall be told thee what thou must do." He had to obey first. "Arise, and go into the city." How simple—as all the Lord's commands surely are. And they are not grievous either. It is not the yoke of the law that He puts upon us. "I am Jesus," was the word that revealed Him. And O how precious to know God thus, the incorruptible God in the Person of Christ; He is the Master; and joy lights up the soul, and freedom fills it when His voice is heard and His glory is revealed.

"I am Jesus." What wonders in these three little words! I am Jehovah; the living God; the God of Israel; the Creator of all things; the beginning and the ending, the first and the last.

A fire infolding itself, yet quenched in blood for the sinner—the sinner that believes. How wonderful it

is—this mystery that none can fathom—none reach down into the depths of. Jesus Christ; the Son of God; the great I AM; the Holy One; once crucified on earth, but now exalted, glorified in heaven. Christ Jesus, the Man in glory, real and true and perfect man, yet over all God blessed for ever; object of worship to all in heaven, to many sons and daughters coming up from the wilderness, washed, cleansed, made happy by His love. No dungeon can shut out that, if He be pleased to manifest Himself therein. The high and lofty One, inhabiting eternity, *can* dwell and *does* dwell with the contrite and humble. As the poet says—

“Thou, within no walls confined,
Inhabitest the humble mind;
Such ever bring Thee where they come,
And going, take Thee to their home.”

Yes, “God resisteth the proud, but giveth *grace* unto the humble.” This is what we all want—*more grace*. He is the God of grace; He *giveth* more grace. Ah, it is needful in a day like this; yet the believer may take courage—thank God and take courage, as Paul did in a later day, though he had tremendous opposition to encounter, and the powers of the world were against him. He had learned somewhat of the meaning of that word, “I will show him how great things he must *suffer* for my Name’s sake.” He had asked, “What wilt Thou have me to do?” and he had to learn that the path in which a risen Saviour would lead him was one of *suffering*. Christ on earth was a *suffering* Christ, and whoever would be led of Him, must count upon suffering too. “I will show him what great things he must suffer,” saith the Lord. And this is *honour*.

Surely it is. Honour from God Himself. Christ is glorified. He suffers only in His members *now*, but they will be glorified by and by. *It is the path, the appointed path.* The Head suffered while on earth, the members must also suffer if they follow Him. But all is measured. When He leads, He leads on softly; as Jacob says, according as the children are able to endure (Gen. xxxiii.), *one step at a time*, as we have noticed. O for the willing mind, the listening ear, the sitting at the feet of Jesus, that thus the soul may be instructed, comforted, sustained, kept peaceful even on the thorny road, till He shall come, and lift it out of all its sorrow, and the desert journey shall be for ever past.

THE FATHER.

GALATIANS IV.

In Genesis we have the Father. It is the book of the Patriarchs, and the affections of the Father are displayed and exercised there very beautifully.

Abraham, as well as others in this book, desires a child, and though his house might have been established in a servant, a loved and trusted servant too, Eleazar of Damascus, this will not do for him; so long as he went childless, his heart was unsatisfied.

He makes a feast when his son Isaac is weaned; this was his joy, and to hear himself addressed as a father, and Sarah will then also have the house cleared of the bondwoman and her child.

Jacob adopts the sons of Joseph, giving them the place and inheritance of the first-born, and welcoming them with full affection.

These are among the instances, which we find in these early patriarchal days, of the counsels and affections of our heavenly Father shadowed or expressed in these His representatives in the book of Genesis, and I may add, there is no law, no Moses, no schoolmaster, in this book ; God has the elect *immediately* under His own hand and eye, dealing with them by a *home* method, so to express it, and not as by the intervention of "tutors and governors." The law came afterwards, and then the elect were carried to school, and put under rules and ordinances foreign to the home of their family, treated rather as servants than as children. The head of a school is a schoolmaster. But the dispensation of the Spirit has *now* come, the Son Himself has been manifested, He was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that they might receive the adoption of sons. The elect are now put *on* the ground of His accomplished redemption, and *in* the acceptableness of His beloved person.

Now this condition of things is the Father's delight, there was a need of the schoolmaster for a season; but that need has been answered, and the Father has His child home again. This is not the age of the *vηπιοι*, or the infant, the child that cannot speak, but the age or dispensation of the *νιοι*, the son, the elect who have the Spirit, the Spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, *Abba, Father, filling* the house with that music. It is the time of the weaned Isaac, and all that appertains to the bondwoman must leave the house. This again, I say, is the Father's delight; the affection of the Father finds occasion now to indulge itself to the full.

But the Galatians were disappointing this affection,

they were returning to ordinances; and this is contrary to the Spirit of adoption, taking the elect from the Father's house again to put them under tutors and governors as before, and destroying the free, gracious, confiding communion of children with their Father. They were bringing back Hagar to the house; and it is this which the Spirit so earnestly resents in this part of the epistle to the Galatians; it is this grieved and wounded bosom of the Father that speaks in this fervent epistle. Sarah had expressed this resentment in the book of Genesis, when she said, "Cast out the bondwoman and her son." That word is quoted here, for here in like manner the Spirit in behalf, so to speak, of the Father, expresses the like resentment: Paul would act the part of a parent in this chapter. (See verse 19.) By faith we are *justified* (Gal. iii. 2); by faith we are *made children*. (iii. 26.) A return to ordinances or works of law therefore reproaches Christ, as though He had not accomplished our justification; but it also silences in our hearts the cry of adoption, and this disappoints the love of the Father, and it is that which this chapter with some indignation resents, and I do feel that this gives this part of the epistle a very affecting and beautiful character; it is the resentment or uttered disappointment of Him who so long ago as the days of Abraham and Sarah let His elect know this, that no condition of things as between Him and them would satisfy His heart, but the relationship of a Father to those who not only are, but who know themselves to be children, who are weaned, like Isaac from the milk of ordinances, and brought home to the food of the Father's table.

NONE BUT GOD.

JOB x. 12, 13.

AN EXTRACT.

"I HAVE just been thinking of the words of Job x. 12, 13, "Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation has preserved my spirit. And these things hast thou hid in thine heart: I know that this is with thee." I don't know that I ever noticed the last of these verses before; but it strikes me as being beautiful and comforting. The first is clear enough. Whether it be life natural or life eternal, it is a grant or gift of God. Both are to the Christian. Dim his eye may be with tears, he may be down very far under oppression or perplexity, not knowing his way out of the difficulties that surround him, but God is over all, and he turns to God; that is his relief. "*Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation has preserved my spirit.*" It may be looking back over the past. There is plenty to be thankful for in *that*. But God is looked at. The soul is so distressed from below that none but God can ease it; and I believe the Lord does work that. He knows that none but Himself can satisfy the heart, and He won't let it rest away from Himself; so it looks up under the pressure and speaks to Him; looks at *His* doings; looks into His *thoughts*. This is a wonderful thing, but in Christ I know the thoughts of God.

"He shows His thoughts, how kind they are." I get a look at God manifest in the flesh, and I know He is up there, far above all that can hurt me. I have comfort in the thought that *He* cannot be reached by

any of these arrows. And won't He care for me? What preserves my spirit? What revives my soul? What keeps me from sinking under the many trials of the way? His love, His favour, the manifestation of it that I get when all turns against me, when my head goes down, down, and the billows seem to be rolling over me. 'On the side of their oppressors there was power,' wrote one; 'but they (the oppressed) had no comforter.' (Eccles. iv. 1.) This is not so in Christ, blessed be His name; true though it be oftentimes in the world. The believer sees *His* thoughts; that is, as the Spirit reveals them; and faith boldly enters upon them. "I *know* that this is with thee," he says. What? Life and favour, preservation of the spirit: *hid in the heart of God*. He is love, then, after all, says the soul. Yes; He *is* love; and love to *me*. Ah, this is blessed, this is relief indeed, to know what God is, to know what He is in *Jesus*. This is to behold the Lamb; to sit down under His shadow with great delight; to find *His* fruit sweet unto the taste; and *in* the Lamb to see the expression of God's thoughts—God's thoughts from eternity. He works according to a *purpose*. "I shall make you like my Son. He trod a path of sorrow; now He is in glory. *Faint you not*. You shall be like Him; you shall be with Him where He is."

THE Holy Ghost has "*sealed*" those who believe on Christ crucified and risen, because *redemption* is accomplished; He is "*the earnest*" because the *inheritance is sure*.

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

How blessedly simple is the gospel of the grace of God! It addresses itself only to those who are lost, and who know it. The burden of its message to *such* is, "Come; for all things are now ready." (Luke xiv. 17.)

The *question* of sin is not raised at all; for *that has been* gone into and settled by and between God Himself and His dear Son, who "appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb. ix. 26), and whose resurrection from amongst the dead is intended by God to convey the assurance that He is perfectly satisfied with the price that the Divine Surety paid for us. Hence, God being quite satisfied, the *only* question between you, my reader, and the Almighty God is this,

"Are *you* quite satisfied with His Christ as the *alone* trust and portion of your soul?"

This is the one and only question to which the Holy Ghost is now waiting to hear your reply (see Rom. x. 10), because the Lord from heaven, "the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. ii. 5), has, by His own shed blood, settled every other, to the everlasting glory of God through us (2 Cor. i. 20, Greek), who receive Him by living faith into our hearts. (See all the epistles.)

NOTE.—Whenever *such* is the case, and the work *real*, the life will speak for itself, without the aid of the lips or the constraint of the law.

“SHE'S DEAD, SIR.”

“SHE's dead, sir; she died at Christmas,” was the reply I got on calling to enquire for a poor widow with whom I lodged not long since. The last time I saw her she was tolerably well, attending much as usual to her domestic duties. But she is dead. The house and furniture looked just the same; but “she's dead, sir,” was all I could learn about the departed one from the orphan daughter.

It was a solemn moment; many thoughts pressed much on my mind. It is true that I had more than once spoken to her of the atoning work of Christ, and of the blessedness of present peace with God; but had I thought her opportunities of hearing would have so soon ended, and that she was then actually on the brink of eternity, how much more earnest should I have been in commanding the love of God in Christ to her. But now she is dead! The place that once knew her will know her no more for ever! Whether she really received Christ crucified and risen as her Saviour the future will make manifest. Happy indeed are those who now see such glory and beauty in Jesus the Son of God as to be attracted to Him, and constrained to confess Him before men. Present peace with God, and present testimony for Christ, become those who are saved by the precious blood of the Lamb. Not to confess Christ before men is indeed very solemn; to be ashamed of Christ very alarming; for “whosoever,” said Jesus, “shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed

when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." (Mark viii. 38.)

"Jesus! and shall it ever be,
A mortal man ashamed of Thee?
Ashamed of Thee, whom angels praise,
Whose glories shine through endless days!"

"Ashamed of Jesus! that dear friend
On whom my hopes of heaven depend?
No; when I blush be this my shame,
That I no more confess His name."

Death is so common that many seem to think little more of it than the present separation of tender ties; few appear to regard it as God's just penalty for sin. Men are appointed to death, and after that judgment, because they are sinners. The Son of God came to deliver from death and judgment, by bearing sin, and by being a substitute for those who believe, in going under death and judgment. So that those who accept Christ risen from the dead, and ascended, as their life and righteousness before God, have died and have been judged in Christ their substitute on the cross. Death and judgment are therefore behind them; they have a present standing of completeness in Christ at God's right hand, and they wait for glory; they wait for God's Son from heaven; they expect to be caught up to meet Him in the air, and so be for ever with the Lord. Being cleansed from sin by the precious blood of Christ, the sting of death—which is sin—is gone. If they should die before the Lord comes, it is not strictly death, but falling asleep, as Scripture calls it; or really, as I believe, being put to sleep by Jesus. But the Lord is coming quickly, and we may not even

fall asleep, but be changed in a moment, and caught up to meet the Lord in the air—death and judgment behind us, and glory before us. What a victory! “Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

BECAUSE I LIVE.

“ Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more; but ye see Me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in Me, and I in you.”—John xiv. 19-20.

THE blessed Lord was here distinguishing between the world and His own disciples. This He still does, though to the eye of man all may seem mixed up together, and, indeed, in some respects it is so. But the Lord discerns. “I know my sheep, and am known of mine,” He had said. (ch. x.) In a certain sense, the world did see Him. They saw Jesus of Nazareth—the man who went about doing good. They saw His miracles which He did on them which were diseased. But spiritual sight they had not, so as to discern the glory of His person—such as was given to Peter, when he said, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” This marked the difference between a soul born of God and others—Jesus Christ known as the Son of God, so known as to be received and loved for His own sake, for the glory and beauty that is in Him. He met the soul’s deepest wants, it is true, and *does*. His perfect word underlies it as an everlasting foundation of rest and peace in the presence of God; and so souls are brought to Him by their very needs, and by the fact that His atoning work meets those needs. But it is in

Himself who is the attractive object, apart from any thought of self, when once the question of sin is settled. I am speaking of things as they are. Doubtless the deep significance of His death and resurrection was but little known, if at all, at that time; but they discovered *who* He was, and that by the Father's teaching. The world never saw the Lord after His crucifixion. His disciples did, and *do*. It is that which distinguishes them—which makes a person as taken out of the world by conversion. “Ye see *Me.*” Jesus is known as the Living One; the risen and glorified Man in Heaven. The Holy Ghost reveals Him there. He is the Head of Life—Eternal Life. “Because I live, ye shall live also.” Blessed truth! our life, the believer's life, is hid with Christ in God. Christ *is* our life. There is an everlasting link between Him and His, that can never be severed. Such a thing as severance is impossible. “Because I live, ye shall live also,” is the word of the everlasting God, which stands for ever. Here, then, is an impregnable fortress in which the believer is set, and from which nothing can dislodge him. The sight of this truth gave Paul such confidence as we find in Romans viii., “I am persuaded,” he says, “that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God,” &c.; and this persuasion made him happy, in the midst of all the changes and trials which beset him. They could not shake his *peace*,—they could not touch his *life*. Christ was both. And the blessedness of the saints in the present dispensation is this, that

they are indwelt by the Holy Ghost, and they *know*, according to the word, "In that day ye shall *know* that I am in my Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." Let this be pondered. It is a wondrous blessing. Christ in the Father—the Church in Christ—Christ in His people. A great mystery, you will say; yea, but a reality to be enjoyed. The epistle to the Ephesians gives us the church in Christ, that to the Colossians, Christ in the church. Christ, the head of the body, is glorified. The church, as seen in Him, according to the counsels of God, is glorified too; not, of course, that resurrection is applied to the *bodies* of the saints—that waits the coming of the Lord; but the saints themselves are looked at as glorified in the mind of God, and as seen in Christ. This is Ephesians. In the Colossians, it is Christ in you the *hope* of glory. Here it is the *life*; Christ's life in the saints on earth; Christian life if you will; heavenly, of course, in its character—the mind of heaven displayed on earth. Christ, when here, was the perfect display of it—heaven and earth embodied in Him, the man Christ Jesus. His Spirit now would lead the saints in His path—that of dependance, obedience, confidence in God; would form Christ in them, as it is in the Galatian epistle—see in each the mind of Christ. But here I pause. The subject is most sweet, the consolation springing from it deep and abundant. The Lord lead His beloved saints, who are in this vale of tears, to realize what He has done, and what He is to His redeemed and *for* them; an exhaustless theme, a theme for eternity, but one which may well occupy us now each day and hour we live. Oh to learn to praise Him better; to make more melody

in our hearts to Him; to take up the spirit of the exhortation one to another, "O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of His praise to be heard."

A SOLEMN WORD TO CARELESS CHRISTIANS.

By careless Christians, we mean those who are not habitually prayerful, and diligent in searching the Scriptures, and therefore not watchful as to their walk and conversation,—not much exercised as to whether they are walking faithfully or unfaithfully, where they go, with whom they associate, what they listen to, or whether Christ be honoured or dishonoured by their conduct and conversation. Yet they are Christians. They love the Lord Jesus. They have taken shelter in His precious blood, and have a measure of peace in the assurance that He made a just atonement for all their sins by His own death upon the tree. But unsound instruction, and bad examples of practical Christianity, may have greatly helped them into this careless state, and, until they find themselves in some grievous mental or bodily distress, they seldom think of the Saviour's words, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore, and repent." Oh! how many thousands are inwardly saying at the present moment,

"Where is the blessedness I felt
When first I knew the Lord."

Carnal reason has, alas! come in, and loosened the heart from subjection to God's word. "We must not be so particular," said one. "We can go to quiet worldly parties," said another, "like many other Christians." "What's the harm of singing a song," said a third,

provided it is not immoral?" "Why not go to concerts," said a fourth? "I do not like the Scripture readings" was heard also after a while; for the spiritual desires are soon blunted, and the appetite for God's truth taken away with such carnal pleasures. At last the meetings became dull, the faults of God's people were prominently talked of, the world's religion preferred, and then the world's pleasures of sin. Alas! alas! how many have in this day trodden this downward path.

"How is it," one lately asked, "that the work in young Christians seems so superficial to what it used to be?" The answer given was perhaps the true one. There has been the greatest pains taken to shew them the true ground of peace by the blood of the cross, and there the instruction has stopped with many; so that their souls have not got into the truth of life *in Christ risen*. They have, therefore, not a just estimate of the world as under God's judgment; or of the flesh, as so incorrigibly bad, as fit only for judgment and death, and therefore not to be trusted, but that Christ is to be trusted about everything. They know that by the cross they have forgiveness of sin; but they do not see the old man with his affections and lusts crucified there, and that their life now is in a risen Christ. They are therefore living in the old creation instead of in Christ, *in whom they are complete, and who is the Head of all principality and power.*

There are two ways in which God's truth is learned; either taking God's estimate of the world, and the flesh, and Satan; and also of the full rest and highest possible blessings He has given us *in Christ* from the written

word ; or, if God's own revelation be slighted, and that gone into which He warns against, the reality of these things must be proved by a very humbling process.

Conversing lately with a Christian brother on this subject, he said, " I have only to-day met in the train with another example of the terrible results of careless walk. Speaking," said he, " to the passengers in my carriage of the blessedness of being in Christ, one of them gave a hearty response as to his personal safety, and after a while related something as follows of his own history." We insert it, because we believe that such cases are by no means rare, and we hope, too, that this paper may be the means of solemnly arresting any who are beginning in *their hearts* to let Christ slip as the one object of their affections and desires, and are ready to fall into Satan's snare that they may be saved, and yet walk, more or less with the world, and like the world. May God use these lines to deliver such, that they may escape the bitter reaping of sowing to the flesh !

" At the age of eighteen I knew what it was to have the forgiveness of sins ; but I did not openly confess Christ. Soon after I went to London as an assistant in one of the largest houses of business. My advancement was so rapid, that I was about to be taken into partnership. There were many young men there, all infidels but one, who was a Unitarian. They were fond of argument, and I often got into discussion with them, yet I can truly say that I never for a moment doubted the existence of the Creator. I early indulged in habits of intemperance, and gradually went into the most fearful lengths of sin, too horrible to relate. I lost my situation of course ; and at last I left my wife and

children, and gave myself up to drink, selling and pawning everything I could get. For three weeks, at one time, food never entered my lips; nothing but spirits and beer. At length one night I determined to destroy myself by drowning, and went out with that intention. Passing a public-house, a companion saw me in this state of frenzy, and asked me to have something to drink. ‘I can’t stay,’ said I, ‘I’m going to flee.’ ‘Well,’ said he, ‘come in and have some gin, and I’ll flee with you.’ A little persuasion induced me to go in, and after drinking, I asked him if he were ready to flee? ‘No,’ said he, ‘I shant flee now.’ While meditating on soon throwing myself over the bridge, a voice seemed to say to me, ‘No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God.’ This was repeated three times. I was desperate, and ran, I hardly knew whither, until I found myself in my little room, a place about seven feet square. There I flung myself upon my knees, and said something like this, ‘God, I am Thy creature, Thy hands have made me, Thou canst stop my breath in a moment, take away from me the desire for drink.’ There I remained for hours and fell into a calm sleep; the next morning I awoke, and the desire for drink was gone. For days I besought God to keep me from the thirst for drink. The suffering that my wife and children were undergoing through my sin would often stare me in the face, and then I would be tempted again to commit suicide. But God in His mercy kept me. While I was considering how I should like to hear something of my wife and children, who were 100 miles distant, I received a letter asking me to go to them immediately.”

But to be brief, my friend found on enquiring, that he is now labouring fervently to bring souls to Christ, and especially seeks out drunkards ; and knows the comfort of walking in God's ways, with his wife and family under God's care and blessing. To God be all the praise !

My reader, if you are a careless christian, lay these facts to heart : you do not know where one step in the way of declension may lead you. The world knows not God ; it crucified the Lord of Glory ; it is under judgment ; its very life, falsely so called, is kept going by seeking happiness without God and without Christ. If then, my fellow christian, you are seeking a place in it, or even looking favourably on its ways or fashions, its pleasures of sin, or find in your heart any *desire* after them, oh confess it to God as your sin, seek grace from Him to be true to Christ, to serve Christ, honour Christ, follow Christ ; cry earnestly to Him, and you will assuredly have more than you ask or think.

FRUITBEARING.

"From me is thy fruit found."—HOSEA xiv. 8.

"Without me ye can do nothing."—JOHN xv. 5.

OUR God and Father loves to see
The Spirit's fruit abound
In those who form His family;
Fruit precious, sweet, and sound.

Yet let us not think overmuch
Of how much fruit we bear;
For they whose thoughts are often such
Will yield the smallest share.

Nor let us in supineness sleep,
And yield to fleshly ease;
Or o'er our souls a chill will creep,
A blight our fruit will seize.

But may we quietly sit still
At Jesu's blessed feet;
With grace and truth our bosoms fill,
And humbly keep our seat.

The soul that unto Jesus cleaves,
And leans upon His breast,
And of His fulness so receives,
Will soon show forth the rest.

His fruitfulness will then appear
In each approved pursuit;
For God appoints to each a sphere
In which to yield Him fruit.

Then such a soul will, like a tree
Set by the river's side,
Bring forth, for God and man to see,
Good fruit that will abide.

And all the praise shall be the Lord's,
To whom alone 'tis due;
For He it is that grace affords
To yield Him aught that's true.

A FEW WORDS TO EVANGELISTS.

FELLOW-WORKERS in the gospel, shall we not do wisely to enquire diligently of our hearts, whether the same power accompany our testimony that once did ?

There is a danger of falling into the spirit of routine, of engaging oneself in God's service because it is one's habit. Many are going on as they have gone for years past, but is this progress merely the effect of the im-

petus of the first start, or is it daily, hourly, in the energy of God's Spirit? There is unquestionably a greater outward ease in testifying for God to be seen in many, than there was a few years ago; but is there more power upon the hearts of the hearers than there used to be? Let us not mistake the ease which follows practice for Divine power. A flow of words is not unction, ability to arrest hearers is not necessarily of God. There may be a greater knowledge of God's word—is this surprising after men have read it for years—but is there greater strength in wielding the sword? Brethren, in one word, is there more dependance upon God, more prayer, more communion, than there was at first? Some, looking at their lack of power, excuse themselves by saying, times are changed, men's hearts are now used to the gospel; the tale is grown old to them; but would it not be wiser to enquire, Have we changed? Are we less upon our knees? Have we less care for the salvation of souls? Do we burn less for God's glory? Do we draw less from God's strength than we did in the early days of our conscious weakness?

Scripture affords us abundant illustrations, in the life stories of its strong men, of the working of decay.

Let us place the candle of the word before our own souls! Take Israel at Ai as an example; they were then in their proper position and attitude, being in Canaan, and face to face with God's foes; yet they were, nevertheless, outside the shining of God's light, for evil was among them, and they knew it not. So we may be formally in God's service, yet morally at a distance from Him. Israel, flushed with previous victory, went

to the battle, but in the confidence of past success, and not in present dependance upon God. So our wretched flesh is puffed up by the very victories God granted us, and we use this strength to exalt ourselves, and trust in our own resources, and not alone in Him,—we measure ourselves by ourselves in our folly.

To be in this state of soul, is to be out of communion with God. Neither did this state come about in a moment. Slowly the believer grew out of communion, yet continued to present the appearance of strength before others; gradually he forsook his wonted dependance upon God, yet shrunk not from his usual course of service. He carried the sword, wielded formerly by God's strength, but wist not his inability to handle it. He lived on his old energy. Went forward in the impetus of past devotedness. He did not question his real state, but, like Sampson shorn of his hair—emblem of his dependance upon God—met his enemies, saying, “I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself.” (Judges xvi. 20.)

Brothers, is it not so oftentimes with us? Who has not visited the dying, or encountered the infidel, or preached to the unconverted, and felt in his soul the bitterness of defeat? Has God changed? Or have we forgotten to plead with Him? If we are in communion with God we are depending upon Him, and this leads to prayer, and hence arises victory.

Can we see into our own hearts by the light of God's word? Do we know our real condition, or is it said of us in the heavens, “Grey hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not”? (Hosea vii. 9.)

WE MUST HOLD TO GOD'S PRINCIPLES.

AN EXTRACT.

We are not to imitate 1 Cor. xii.-xiv. or play the part of Corinthians, as though we had all the gifts of Corinthians. Nor are we to assume to be the only light in our place, as the Church then was at Corinth. But we must have faith to know this, that the scattering the lights, or the judgment of the candlestick is not the withdrawal of His Spirit from His temple, the gathered saints. We must hold to God's principles in the judged place, or the scene around us. In typical language, we bow to the sword, but not to the image of the Chaldean, we own the head of the ten tribes, but not the calf at Bethel.

We are not to expect, it may be, such corporate power as would have been, had no divine judgment come upon the candlestick; but we are not to be a congregation without faith, to regard it as a habitation of God through the Spirit, with power to order and feed it in the Spirit.

And again, as we are not to surrender God's principles to the corruptions around, neither are we to give up because of some disappointed efforts in asserting them. "Let God be true, and every man a liar." We are to distinguish things that differ. We are not to give up principle because it is hotly assailed, neither are we to do so because it has been poorly and faintly illustrated. The principle outlives a thousand disappointing attempts to exhibit it. The light is not to be judged because of the soiled lamp through which it may shine. We are no more to identify it with that

than with the darkness around. I may be grieved, disappointed that the candle has been, as it were, under a bushel, but I am to remember that it is a candle still, able to give light to all that are in the house.

SHORT NOTES ON DANIEL.

No. 6.

CHAPTER V. The character of evil as developed in the two following chapters is especially a foreshadowing of the future, that is to say, of certain acts which will take place at the close, more than an historical picture of what befalls the Gentile powers during the course of their existence.

There we find iniquity reaching to its highest point, and because of the way in which it develops itself, no room is left for God to intervene in grace; hence summary judgment from Him closes the scene.

Through king Belshazzar's impiety, the question is raised between the living God and idols. Such being the case, God must act, and He does, vindicating His name, and making His power known. For the question thus raised is settled that very night by the king's destruction.

All this was no sudden thought with God; judgment had for a long time been declared (Isa. xlvi. 1, and xiii.; Jer. xxv. 12); but the impious conduct of the king in using the vessels that his father had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem (v. 2), and in view of these tokens of the supreme and only God "praising the gods of gold, of silver, and of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone," was the cause of the immediate execution

of that which already had been announced. God could not bear with such profanity, nor would He allow a power to go unjudged which had risen to these heights of iniquity.

But how altered everything is when He comes on the scene (*v. 6*); how the haughtiness of man is brought down, and the loftiness of man made low. The king, one moment with blasphemy on his lips, (the expression of what was in his heart,) the next, his countenance is changed, and his thoughts trouble him; so that the joints of his loins are loosed, and his knees smite one against another. What a transition! what a pitiable object man is when thus brought into the presence of God! It brings to mind Rev. vi., where all the "kings of the earth, and great men, and rich men, and chief captains, and the mighty men,"—those who had made the world tremble at their frown, or bow before their power,—are calling on the rocks and hills to cover them, sooner than they should meet the One once led as a lamb to the slaughter, but now crowned with glory and honour, and coming in the clouds of heaven with His own glory, and that of the Father, and of the holy angels.

What is most important to notice here is, that none of the king's wise men could read the writing, or make known to him the interpretation; though it was in the Chaldean tongue, yet they are powerless to learn the mind of God. As is always the case, "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned: but he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is

discerned by no man. (1 Cor. ii. 14-15.) Of what avail was their wisdom to give them an understanding of the divine mind?

And how could it be otherwise? Mixed up with that which God was going to judge, associated in every way with the evil, their own language even is but a mystery to them. "To depart from evil is understanding," and they are in the midst of it; hence that which a child might have known is to them but a source of wonder and amazement.

There was, however, one outside of it all—the queen mother. (Comp. v. 10 and 2.) She had profited by past lessons, and learnt what it was to fear the Lord, from the judgment executed during her husband's reign. Now, in their trouble, they are ready to listen to her; but it is too late. "Because I called, and ye refused, I lifted up my hand, and no man regarded; . . . I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh," is ever true, and souls will find it to be so; for it may do to put man off, but not God.

She remembered Daniel, though all else had forgotten him. The world knows not the born ones of God, because it knew Him not. (1 John iii. 1.) Daniel's warning and the judgments of the previous reign had passed away from their minds, had all been forgotten; they had failed to lay it to heart, and now the door is shut for ever.

All this is but a picture of these latter days: there is no profiting by what has passed; the present scene drives out everything else from the mind—nothing is remembered. Nebuchadnezzar with all his dignity had never sunk so low, had never acted like this.

Daniel is now brought before the king, but his conduct towards him is very different from what it was towards his father Nebuchadnezzar (iv. 19), and rightly so; the pride for which the former was justly judged, was a very different thing from the blasphemy that characterized Belshazzar. He, by his conduct, had taken the place of an insolent enemy of the God of Israel—had applied the righteous judgment of Jehovah, in delivering over His people to the Gentiles to the actions of his own gods.

It was not merely idolatry therefore, but blasphemy; and Daniel accordingly answers as became him (*v.* 17), refusing the king's gifts, and declaring to him God's revelation of his doom, as his actions had now left him no room for repentance.

He tells him, moreover, how pride had been the ruin of his father. Given by God supreme dominion in the whole earth, he had used it to exalt himself, and judgment as a consequence soon followed, until he learnt “that the Most High God ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will.”

Belshazzar had not laid this to heart, but making light of it all in his reckless indifference, has to learn God's thoughts about himself, and of a judgment to come that very night.

This is what sin and Satan would ever seek to hide, and what they will too well succeed in doing with respect to the judgments soon about to fall on the scene in which we live; blinding and deceiving men's hearts with a sense of safety, so that while they shall say, “Peace and safety,” then destruction will come upon them, and they shall not escape. (1 Thess. v. 3.)

SCRIPTURE QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

WILL you kindly tell me, at your leisure, what you think the meaning of the words are, "Prayer also shall be made for Him continually; and daily shall He be praised"? (Psalm lxxii. 15.)—S.

The difficulty in the mind of the enquirer we judge is, how, if we regard the psalm to be a description of the reign of Christ, that "prayer" could be made for Him who is God over all. We should, however, remember that our Lord Jesus will reign over the earth still as in subjection to His God and Father, though sitting on His own throne, and reigning before His ancients gloriously. Jehovah says of Him, in the second psalm, "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." We understand the force of the prayer in question to be this, that at the time when every knee is bowing to Christ, and all know the Lord, from the least to the greatest, there will be adoring worship to Him, and a constant desire animating the heart for His exaltation and honour. Regarding Him—as they will do—as the fruit of David's loins, that Jehovah promised should sit upon David's throne, when they are really beholding the King in His beauty, He will not only be the object of constant praise, but of desire also, that His name be continually exalted.

In Isaiah liii. 4 we read, "Yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." Does this apply to the cross?—S.

When the Jews crucified the Lord of glory, they thought they were carrying out the law of Moses in thus disposing of Him as a blasphemer. They said, "He hath spoken blasphemy;" and when Pilate hesitated to pass sentence, they said, "We have a law, and by our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." So now, in their present state of ignorance and unbelief, the Jews regard Him as thus having been stricken and smitten of God for His own evil. But by-and-by, when the Spirit of God removes the scales from their eyes, and they repent, they will utter this very touching language of the prophet, "He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace (or the chastisement which purchased our peace) was upon Him, and with His stripes we ARE HEALED."

"THE FLOOD CAME AND TOOK THEM
ALL AWAY."

"As the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away."—MATTHEW. xxiv. 37-39.

THEY went on as usual *until*—until the man who had preached to them and warned them for 120 years went into the place of safety; they knew not the truth of his warning *until* the judgment proved it. Poor unbelieving men! They saw Noah go into the ark, "and the door was shut" upon them; they saw the heavens pour down their waters, and the fountains of the deep rise up—judgment above, judgment beneath—and *then*, when it was too late, they believed.

Infidels will believe some day in the words of God; but what will it avail them when they believe in a hell because they see it and feel it?

There was an illustration of the words of our Lord some time since in a destruction near Sheffield. Near that town was a huge mass of water pent up in a valley by a dam. Should the dam happen to break, all knew that the villages in the valleys below would be swept away; but as people were accustomed to the resistance offered by the dam, they never dreamt of its bursting; so they ate and drank, married and gave in marriage, just as if there were no flood of water above them. But while everybody said, Peace and safety, there was a slow, sure growing of the weight of waters behind the dam. One night, when the poor people in the villages below the pent-up water were in their beds, the dam burst, and in a moment the waters

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rushed down, swallowing up men, women, and children, with sudden destruction.

There were narrow escapes on that awful night. Two were sleeping in one bed; one was taken by the water, and the other left. A mother tried to save her babe as well as herself, and the poor child was swept out of her bosom and drowned. Two returned to seek their little property, their earthly all, and in their vain endeavour were both taken away in the flood with their property and lost.

When the tale of horror spread over England many a tear rolled down men's cheeks, and some thought with weeping of that great and dreadful day of the Lord which is so near. Unseen by human eye, and only discernible to faith, the waters of coming judgment heap up; and it is only a question of time, and the barrier of longsuffering will give way, and then, when those who have preached and lived Christ are gone (entered the heavens), poor unsaved sinners will know that God's word is true; but they will know it, alas! by being taken away in the flood of judgment.

There will be no judgment, no outburst of wrath, men say. We will keep it in; we will place some of the strong timbers, and lay in more of the stiff soil of good works, temperance, reform, education, and the like. Poor foolish men, to go on as usual in unbelief, and not to believe; they *knew* not until the flood came and took them all away.

But there are God's messengers now crying to men, "Escape for your life," just as there were warners that night before the dam burst, and the waters swallowed up the people of those Yorkshire villages. Such are

regarded by most people as fools; and instead of men escaping for their lives when they receive warning; they do very much as did Lot's sons-in-law when he came to them in the middle of the night, and bade them, "Up, for the Lord will destroy this city"—**THEY WILL NOT BELIEVE.** We know the consequence of these men's disobedience,—they were burned up in Sodom. We know too what befell those who did not escape when the dam burst; and, because God says it, we know that those who will not obey the gospel shall be punished with everlasting destruction.

Will you refuse to believe, dear reader, *until* the flood comes? Will you wait *until* it be too late? What! man of business, are you so busy, so anxious to take care of your goods, that you will lose your body and soul in the lake of fire? What! child of godly parents, do you think you are safe because you have a place in your mother's bosom? Be assured that unless you know the love of Jesus, the flood will come and take you away. Neither let him whose companion is a faithful servant of Christ expect to be saved for the goodness of his friend; for brothers shall be separated from sisters, and sisters from brothers; some will go up to be "with the Lord," and others the flood will take away. When? whispers the naughty heart of unbelief; when? "When they say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction shall come upon them . . . and they shall not escape." In less than one hour, for aught we know, those who love Christ may enter the heavens, and then the judgment will follow upon those who would not obey the gospel; therefore, repent at once.

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Perhaps some soul is saying meekly and humbly, Would that I were safe in Christ; for God's word says, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus." Do you own that you deserve judgment, that your sins must be punished? Look, then, to the cross, and behold the sinless Saviour with the billows of God's wrath rolling on Him, so that He cries out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" That agony was borne for us; that wrath was suffered for us; and the nails, the thirst, the stripes, were for us; the blood was shed for us; all, all was for us.

"For thee He shed His blood;
Weep, till His woes thine eyes bedim;
To that accursed wood
Thou hast nailed Him."

Now look upwards to the glory; see at the right hand of the Father, sitting on the throne, the self-same Jesus; yes, the very Man that was nailed a bleeding sacrifice to the accursed tree. He has risen out of the grave, He has borne the wrath, endured the judgment. He who died for our sins lives for us. Believe in Him, and you are justified; believe in Him, and you have everlasting life. Then you will be, as the Scripture says, IN Christ Jesus; accepted in Him; alive in Him; righteous in Him; complete in Him; in Him who is on the far side of the grave, who became dead, but is alive for evermore.

"Jesus lives! our hearts know well
Nought from us His love shall sever;
Life nor death, nor powers of hell,
Tear us from His keeping ever."

THE PLACE THAT IS CALLED CALVARY.

MATTHEW xxvi. xxvii. xxviii.

In surveying carefully the closing scenes of the Lord's sojourn here we see that all with whom our souls have to do are summoned to take their place in that great transaction, and, as it were, to receive their answer for *eternity*. Not only is *Christ* Himself there, the great centre of all, but *God, angels, disciples, men*, and *Satan* are there; *sin, death, and hell* are there also, as well as the demands and enactments of righteousness, and all find their interest and their place in that great hour, and leave that hour with something for *eternity*. *Satan* is there in the person of Judas. Satan had entered into Judas there, as at the beginning he had entered into the serpent, and in him Satan plays the part, as at the beginning, of the liar and the murderer; for Judas says to the officers, "Whom I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast." But Satan gets his answer as for *eternity*. He falls into the net he had laid for others; he is overthrown. The woman's seed whose heel he bruised, bruises his head, and with him *sin, death, and hell* are overthrown. The veil of the temple is rent, shewing that *sin* was put away; and the graves were opened, making a shew of the spoiling of the strength of death and hell. By death was destroyed him that had the power of death.

Man is in the scene in all his diversity—Gentile and Jewish man, refined and rude, the great ones and the multitude, man in his religion and man in his world, Herod, Pilate, the Pharisees, the Roman soldiers and the Jewish people, and man incurably tainted is con-

victed there, neither uneasiness of conscience nor providential checks affect him to any good purpose; for Pilate breaks through the restraint of his own uneasiness and of his wife's dreams, and though the veil of the temple is rent, the priests go on with their enmity against Christ in spite of it, and though the angel had alarmed them as with the fears of death, the soldiers, for the sake of a little money, tell lies to the governor about the resurrection. Thus *man* is set aside *for ever* as incorrigibly evil.

Disciples are there also, and there betraying their feebleness, their fears, and their ignorance. But still, they were disciples, a people that sought Jesus, that gathered around Him, though in trial they so betrayed themselves, and they are strengthened and comforted. The bright strangers from heaven tell them not to fear, and the risen Lord Himself returns to them with words and looks full of restoration, and peace, and love, and they have good reason to know from all this, His grace and presence secured to them for *eternity*.

Angels are there. They see Jesus in the garden, and again they see the empty tomb. "Seen of angels." And they get fresh occasions of light and joy; they learn secrets that give them new raptures—raptures even beyond what they had known at the foundation of the creation, when they shouted together; they learn something of "the manifold wisdom of God;" they were at the sepulchre for *their own sake* as well as for the *sake of the woman*, as they also spoke comfortably to Mary; and what they learnt then they will remember for *eternity*.

God is there, and with Him the awful, solemn claims

of His righteousness. The three hours of darkness tell us this. That darkness bespoke God's entrance into the scene in the only character in which He could be there, demanding the wages of sin from the Surety, exacting the full purchase-money for the sinner's ransom, and the moment the blood was shed or the life was yielded up, the moment "the offering of Himself" was accomplished, God in all His righteousness was satisfied, and entrance into His presence for sinners was published in heaven, earth, and hell, by the rending of the veil, the rending of the rocks, and the rending of the graves. Righteousness and peace kissed each other as for *eternity*. What a moment it was, and what a place the place that is called Calvary, as we have here seen. All were there, and all getting their answer as for *eternity*.

THE VALUE OF TRACTS.

AN EXTRACT.

A CHRISTIAN gentleman was travelling in a steam-boat. He took some tracts out and scattered about for the passengers to read. Many were glad to get them, and read them carefully. But one gentleman was there who disliked religion and religious people very much. He took one of the tracts and doubled it up, and then deliberately took out his penknife and cut it all up into little pieces. He then held out his hand and scattered the pieces over the side of the boat, to shew his contempt for religion. When he had done this, he saw one of the pieces sticking to his coat. He picked it off and looked at it a moment before throwing it away. On one side of that bit of paper was only one

word; it was the word "*God*." He turned it over, and on the other side was the word "*Eternity*." He threw away the bit of paper. He got rid of that easily enough, but those two solemn words, "*God*" and "*Eternity*," he could not get rid of. He tried drinking, he tried gambling, to drive those words from his mind, but it was no use; they haunted him wherever he went, and he never had any comfort until he became a Christian. That little piece of paper with those two words upon it was the means of his conversion.

**"THE DISCIPLES WERE FIRST CALLED
CHRISTIANS AT ANTIOCH."**

Acts xi. 26.

It is instructive to observe the moment at which this new name was given to the saved ones after the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Up to the time of Christ the Jews alone had been owned as the people of God upon the earth. "He hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself above all people . . . because the Lord loved you."

But His pleasant plant, a noble vine, wholly a right seed, yielded no fruit, and until Christ came,—His elect, in whom His soul delighted,—there was nothing to meet His requirements. Not until then was there one upon the earth in whom He could find joy. Of this He testified by a voice from heaven: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am *well pleased*."

But the Jew in his blindness, and the Gentile in

his deadness, could see no beauty in Him; and they crucified Him. God raised Him from the dead to His own right hand.

Henceforth there is no *earthly* centre. We are gathered to Him who is raised from the dead. There only can rest and satisfaction as well as salvation be found. God no longer deals with an earthly people to find a return for His love, or an answer to His demands. He has found it all in Christ, and He *rests* there. Henceforth He will look nowhere else. To meet the desire of God's heart we must be found in Christ, or headed up under Him.

From Pentecost souls were gathered to Christ as raised from the dead. First, from among the Jews,—the disciples, even AFTER the persecution that arose about Stephen, went “preaching the word to none but unto the *Jews only.*” (Acts xi. 19.)

Still they had no peculiar name. It was after the door had been opened to the Gentiles (Acts x.) that they got a NEW NAME. They were called CHRISTIANS. Both Jew and Gentile gathered in faith by one Spirit to the risen Christ, forming of twain *one new man*, in Christ (1 Cor. xii. 12),—part of Himself,—members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. No longer Jews nor Gentiles, but the Church of God, having no centre upon the earth, but having living union with Christ above, and looking for Him to come and take them up to Himself.

The Jew would *naturally* think of *himself* as belonging to a favoured race; but we, as not in the flesh, have no room for boasting. Self is buried in the grave of Christ. We are *named* after *Him*, and in Him

alone do we glory, in whom we have obtained an inheritance, and in whom we are complete.

There is a promise to those who overcome in Rev. ii. 17 peculiarly precious to the soul: I will give him "a new name." In human relationships, we know the power of a name; how tenderly it strikes upon the ear! But if it be a name bestowed in token of intimate friendship, or relationship of peculiar love, how deeply it stirs the emotions of the heart! This new name corresponds to *His* new name; there is an echo from one to the other. "I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." And again, "I will write upon him *my new name*."

May we now glory in *His name*,—a name which is above every name,—and worship at His feet, until that happy day when we "shall see His face," and His name shall be in our foreheads.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS ON MINISTRY.

2 Cor. iv.-vi.

WHEN the apostle speaks to Timothy of the perilous times (2 Tim. iii.), he puts two things before him; viz., "my doctrine" and "the Scriptures." He says, "Thou hast fully known my doctrine," and "from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures." Now "all they in Asia" had given up the point; they had turned away, as Paul writes, "from me"—that is, from the truth, specially entrusted to the apostle Paul. "Manner of life" necessarily followed "my doctrine."

It is very important that we should understand what

the ministry really is, what God's heart is toward man. The lepers (2 Kings vii. 4) literally found that there was only ruin where they were, but that boundless provision was secured for them elsewhere. God has unfolded Himself. His heart is declared by the Son of His love,—the only one who could declare it.

Moses prays, "Shew me thy glory." But the ministry now is, that beholding the Lord, *then I possess* it; I am transformed into the same image. Stephen expected Jesus to come from glory. He is shown the glory, and then taken to it. The Holy Ghost reveals Jesus to him in the glory; and he dies, and goes to glory. Thus Stephen is the example of a happy death-bed. But Paul, through the ministry of the glory, can live and walk here a happy death-bed; as he says, "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be manifest in our body." Stephen, because of his link with Jesus in glory, can rise superior over death and suffering here, spending his last moments in prayer for his murderers. Paul could walk in death here because of his present possessions in glory. One could go out of the world superior to every grievance in it; and the other could stay in it superior to every affliction in it.

The Jews had rejected the testimony of the Holy Ghost in the person of Stephen. The citizens now proclaimed, in the stoning of Stephen, "We will not have this man to reign over us." And God now announces, in effect, "As man has refused my Son His own place on earth, I will take my people to be with Him in glory." Hence Jesus is revealed to Saul of Tarsus in glory. All blessing now springs from the

glory. It is the source, and this is the ministry. In the glory Christ identifies the Church on earth with Himself. The light now for a sinner's soul is the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. Mount Sinai is REVERSED. The glory then was fatal to him who approached near to it; and it was a ministry of condemnation. God was demanding righteousness, and there was none. It is now the ministry of righteousness. We have our Saviour in the glory. The glory *imparts* to me. I possess it. My home is there. God's own Son has come forth and borne the judgment. He has established righteousness. And God, from the depths of His heart, can assure my soul that my place is nigh unto Himself in glory.

The Son has done everything. He made the world at first, and finished it up with man, through whom sin entered, and consequent judgment on all. He then became a man, bore the judgment on man, rises out of it, and, beginning with man, He makes all things new, until in the end there will be a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. We are now united to Jesus Christ the Son of God in glory. I not only behold the glory, I possess it. I am changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord. I am not merely *expecting* glory, as a poor man with great expectations, but I possess all things. I am a rich man among the destitute. The power of the glory even now forms me into that which suits itself, as it will fully into His likeness when He shall appear. The soul thus linked with Christ is in the highest condition and position possible for a creature. The dying thief is in a moment transferred into it.

Stephen dies, and surveys it before he enters it. Paul possesses it, and walks down here having nothing, and yet possessing all things. The disclosures which Christ had made on earth of the Father's feelings about the prodigal can now be verified and enjoyed.

Christ presses on souls the *good* of His work, and not simply the work itself. Souls will never have power to walk here if their hearts are not sustained by the power of the glory, the fatted calf, the great supper, where they can only be satisfied to the full. If you be risen with Christ, seek the things which are above. If you be not risen with Christ, you are in the thing out of which He is risen. As an illustration, I may say you ought to be a butterfly—you were a caterpillar. Be occupied with *flying*. Walk in the spirit, and you will mortify the deeds of the body. A saint is like a diamond—a diamond holds the light. The greater the light you are in, the more you know your blessed position—the more the diamond shines. We are now children of the light. The moment you draw near Christ you will feel the light, and it will detect you—you begin to see yourself. Christ shines in you the moment you are awakened; and that is light which doth make manifest. I first see myself, like one coming into a room hung with mirrors; but all of myself being reproved, then Christ Himself fills my heart, and I am transformed into His likeness morally. I possess the glory. I live and enjoy the circle of delights *then* in fellowship with the Father and the Son. My joy is full. I am rich among the destitute here; so rich that though they cannot impart to me, yet I, though poor, can make many rich. Thus the

ministry of the glory makes me a minister of it; for, like Caleb, I not only have taken of the grapes of the land, but the land itself is my possession. The Lord lead our souls to understand and enjoy our present position in Christ in glory, that we may truly witness for Him down here.

REMARKS ON MATTHEW XXIV. XXV.

(MATTHEW xxiv. 29-31.)

No. 5.

WHILE unexampled sorrow and distress will characterize the great tribulation, yet many will be saved out of it. Not only an elect people of Israel, as we have seen, but "a great multitude, which no man can number, of *all nations*," will be brought to stand in joy and blessing before the throne of God, through the blood of the Lamb. "These are they which came out of (the) great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God," &c. (Rev. vii. 9-17.)

At the close of this period there will be a terrible commotion of the great powers; that is, everything that can be moved will be shaken, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. (Heb. xii. 27, 28.) These commotions will precede the Lord's personal revelation in power and great glory. We read: "*Immediately after* the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and *then* shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven . . . and they shall

see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." (*vv. 29, 30.*) Observe that "the sign" is connected with the manifested glory of the Lord Himself. There have been many conjectures about what we are to understand by "the sign;" but perhaps there is no better solution than the tenth chapter of Revelation furnishes. There we are taught that when the Lord (symbolized by an angel) takes possession of the earth, by setting His right foot upon the sea, and His left foot on the earth, He is not only clothed with a cloud, and His face as it were the sun (expressive of the highest majesty), and feet as pillars of fire (descriptive of His almighty power in judgment); but we are told that *a rainbow was upon His head*, which surely is a token or sign, that though He come to judge the world in righteousness, He still remembers His covenant with the earth and all flesh. (See Gen. ix. 11-16.) Then will our Lord's testimony before the high priest be fulfilled, "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." (Matt. xxvi. 64.) Then too will "all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." (*v. 30.*) It will be a terrible time of anguish and mourning for those who are then on the earth, and they shall not escape; for "every eye shall see Him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him." (Rev. i. 7.) The nineteenth chapter of the Revelation gives us most affecting details of the terrible judgment upon the living when the Lord thus comes out of heaven with His saints. In the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew

we have simply the power and glory of Christ, and His dealings specially with His elect of Israel, in answer to the questions as to the end of the age, and the time of His coming to the earth, when Israel shall say, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." Accordingly we are next told that angels will be sent forth with the great sound of a trumpet, to gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. (v. 31.) The meaning of these words becomes plain enough when we turn to the Old Testament Scriptures. Our Lord seems to have referred to Isaiah; for there we find it predicted that *a great trumpet shall be blown*, the effect of which will be to collect the scattered ones of God's ancient people ready to perish, and bring them to worship Jehovah in Jerusalem. "Ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel. And it shall come to pass in that day that *the great trumpet* shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem." (Isa. xxvii. 12, 13.)

It is important to notice that this action our Lord speaks of is the ministry of angels, and that it is simply a gathering of people from one part of the earth to another that they may worship in the holy city; consequently, there is no mention of resurrection, or of persons being changed in a moment, as will take place when the Lord descends into the air for us. Again, we may notice that these elect are gathered from "the four winds," which is a Jewish form of speech, and applied by the prophet Zechariah to those whom God

has scattered, “I have spread you abroad as the *four winds of the heaven*, saith the Lord.” (Zech. ii. 6.) It is clear that such language cannot be applied to the church of God; for however much it is divided through our sin and folly, yet it has never been scattered to the four winds, which we presume is a figure of the decided way in which God in judgment has scattered His earthly people northward, southward, eastward, and westward, so that we shall not know where they are, and no one will be able to gather them again but He who has spread them abroad. The expression, “from one end of heaven to the other,” is also a similar phrase to what we find in the Mosaic writings. “Ask from one side of heaven unto the other,” is certainly a form of speech which does not refer to the heavens, but to an extent on earth which is unlimited. (Deut. iv. 32.) Again, “If any of thine be driven out unto the *outmost parts of heaven*, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will He fetch thee,” seems to refer to this very time. (Deut. xxx. 4.) We thus see how an intelligent Jew would understand, from the form of speech used in the ancient Scriptures, such phrases as “from the four winds,” and “from one end of heaven to the other.” Those who are in Christ, and have the Spirit of God, scarcely need to be informed how totally inapplicable such language is to those who compose the church of God, and are made partakers of the heavenly calling. It is not surprising, therefore, that we find no such expressions used in the epistles, where the Christian’s hope is so fully and clearly taught. May we, then, patiently wait for God’s Son from heaven!

“ Ah, yes, Lord Jesus ! (Thou whose heart
Still for Thy saints doth care,)
We shall behold Thee as Thou art,
And Thy full image bear.

“ Thy love sustains us by the way
While pilgrims here below ;
Thou dost, O Saviour, day by day,
Thy suited grace bestow.

“ But oh ! the more we learn of Thee,
And Thy rich mercy prove,
The more we long *Thy face to see*,
And fully prove thy love.

“ Then shine, *Thou bright and Morning Star !*
Dispel the dreary gloom ;
Oh, take, from sin and grief afar,
Thy blood-bought people home ! ”

THE QUESTION OF RESPONSIBILITY ! HAVE YOU CONSIDERED IT ?

SALVATION from beginning to end is entirely of *God*. It is not, as man tells you, that if you keep the law and believe on Christ, then you shall be saved. No, but “*without law*” (Rom. iii. 21 *in Greek*), for man cannot keep it. You cannot keep it. God *has* in His own grace (because He so loved poor sinners, who were without strength to keep His law,) *given* Christ to die for the ungodly. Christ crucified *has been* set forth the great propitiatory sacrifice. It was God who gave Him to die for sinners, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God. It is God also who is now commanding all men everywhere (Acts xvii. 30) to change their minds about Him, and to believe the Gospel, *i.e.*, the good news about His Son’s *death for our sins*, and resurrection

for our justification. (Rom. iv. 25.) It is God who justifies every sinner who takes Him at His word. It is God who will finally glorify every sinner whom He has justified. The blood of Jesus HAS BEEN SHED; it is God who has set it forth for the remission of sins, and now the reader is informed and warned that he is RESPONSIBLE to God for the way in which that blood is TREATED by him.

Oh! let him know that his prayers for *forgiveness* are the proofs of his ignorance, and that he is *at this moment* guilty of trampling that blood under his feet, if *he has not* availed himself of the free pardon and perfect peace that HAS BEEN SECURED BY IT for all and any who are trusting to CHRIST ALONE.

"I AM VERY HAPPY."

DURING the winter of 1859, in a village not far from London, a poor man was dying. A gentleman of the village came to his bedside, and kindly asked if he could do anything for him. "I am *very, very happy*," was his simple reply. "But," producing a prayer-book, "you are dying; shall I not read a prayer with you?" "Oh! no, sir, I am *very happy*; I'm resting on the *finished* work of Christ." Having so said, he bade his friends farewell, and "fell asleep in Jesus."

My reader, are you also resting on the *finished* work of the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you enquire, "What must *I do* to be saved?"

"Nothing, either great or small,
Nothing, sinner—No!
Jesus did it—did it *all*—
Long, long ago."

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

SCRIPTURE QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

WHAT is the meaning of the text we so often hear quoted—“Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them”? (Matt. xviii. 20.)—M.

1st. It is clear that only true believers could be really gathered to the Lord’s name. 2nd. In a previous chapter (the sixteenth) the Lord pronounced the nation to be “a wicked and adulterous generation,” “left them, and departed” (*v. 4*); and then said He would build something else—His church. “Upon this rock *I will* build my church.” (*v. 18*.) We are not surprised therefore to find afterwards, when our Lord spoke of “the church,” that He should give the germ of all its great practical principles in a few words, which this verse seems to us to contain. 3rdly. Being gathered to His name *demands*, in every respect, conduct worthy of that name, and *forbids* the tolerance or even introduction of anything that dishonours that precious name. 4th. We know, from subsequent teaching of the Holy Ghost in the epistles, that He who is “in the midst” *is* now “head of the body the church”—“one body;” *has* sent down the Holy Ghost to form, indwell, and energize this body—“one spirit;” and *is* also “Son over His own house”—“one Lord.” It would then seem to us impossible to intelligently act upon this verse according to the Lord’s mind, without the practical acknowledgment of all these points of truth. It is distressing to see the use that is often made of this precious Scripture. Happy those who have a single eye to the Lord’s glory. We know who said, “If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.” (Matt. vi. 22.)

A poor man asks: “If Satan be bound during the millennium, how is it there will be sin, curse, and death, as in Isaiah lxv. 20?”

Because, though Satan be bound, and the Lord personally reigning, man’s evil nature, though greatly restrained, and in the most favourable circumstances, is still the same. The end of the millennium will be a most awful proof of man’s unmentionable state as a sinner. “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

THE LOST ONE FOUND;

OR, A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF SAILOR SAM.

A FEW years since at a village in Somersetshire, there lived a man and his wife, named Miller; they had a family of children, one of whom, their son Samuel, at the age of ten years, ran away, and his parents knew not what had become of him. They mourned his loss more sadly than if he had died under their roof. But he went to sea, and after an absence of twenty years spent in the East India and China trade, he returned, a fine, stalwart man, what his companions would call "a jolly sailor."

On landing, he went to his native place to look for his parents, but they had removed to Langport; thither he went in search of them, and was told that the man he enquired for worked for a Mr. Stuckey. When he got to the place of business, he saw an elderly man sweeping the pavement, and said to him, "Does Mr. Stuckey live here?" "Yes," was the reply; "Do you want to see him?" "No; but I suppose that I want to have a word with a man that works for him," said the sailor.

Twenty years had so changed both, that there was no recognition on either side. The old man then asked the younger—

"What is the man's name whom you want?"

"James Miller," said the sailor.

"That's my name," replied the other.

"Well, if you are the man I'm looking for, *I'm your Sam,*" said the heavy broad sailor.

"No! you're not my son," said the father.

"But *I am* your son," persisted the sailor.

"Well, if you are, your mother will know you—come along with me."

They went together to the old man's home, and the father sent one of his children into the garden to his wife, with a message that Samuel was come home. She immediately came in, and looked stedfastly at the stranger for some time in silence—at length she said, with a significant shake of the head, "That is not our Samuel" and flaunted out of the room. Presently she returned, and said, "Our Samuel had a piece of wood grown into his arm." The sailor instantly jumped up, drew off his jacket, bared his arm, and said, "There! will that do?" and sure enough the splinter was there, and as easily slipped about as on the day he left home.

"Yes! oh, yes! it is our Samuel; *the lost one is found!*" the mother exclaimed; and they fell on his neck and kissed him; rejoicing like the father over the prodigal son.

The splinter in his arm was the result of an accident. James was making a faggot-rick, and to please his son, who was just able to run about, he put him on the rick, and thoughtlessly threw the faggots at him. After some time of enjoyment, the little fellow began to cry, and the father reproaching himself for his folly, took him down, soon succeeded in soothing him, and so the matter passed away. Some time after, the child said, "Father the piece of wood is still in my arm," which on examination proved true, and the skin so completely grown over it, that the wood could easily be slipped about. The parents were concerned, and time

after time was proposed for taking him to a surgeon to have it cut out, but the time never arrived, as the Lord in His wondrous love had ordered it, so that at length it became the mark of identity.

The parents, however, soon discovered that their long lost son had returned to them, not only lost to all sense of his soul's eternal interest, but even to any care for the morality common among men. Deeply grieved and yearning over him with a parents' love, they sought by words of tender remonstrance and entreaty to win him to some consideration of these things, but all in vain; and his parents' society soon became uncongenial and irksome to the sailor. Two of his brothers had heard of his return, and came from a short distance to spend the day with him, and, as they said, "to have a jolly spree."

It was so ordered in the providence of God, that the gospel of His grace should be preached that night in that place by a stranger; the father having heard of it, entreated his son to accompany him to the preaching, but he declined, preferring the company of his brothers, who like himself were "without God and without hope in the world," and "cared for none of these things." So the three brothers started for the tavern to seek congenial company. Finding him immovable, the father said to his son, "Well, Samuel, if you will not go with me, I will go with you!" and there in that evil place sat the swearing, drinking sons, and the praying father.

After a short time, one of the brothers said, "Come, Sam, let us go to another place." They went a little way, the father following with a yearning heart.

Presently Samuel said to his brothers, "Let's go back, there's no fun in having father about after our heels," and back they went to the father's house. When there, in reply to further entreaty, Sam said, "Well, I suppose there'll be nothing but sulks in the house, now I'm come home if I don't go to hear the preaching to night, so I'll go."

The preacher not knowing of his presence had read the fifteenth chapter of Luke, and chosen for his subject the lost son, or the father's love to the prodigal. During the evening his attention was arrested, for God had evidently spoken to him in the secret of his heart, convincing him of his state as a "*sinner!*" and his guilty soul trembled at the thought of God's judgments for sin. He returned to his father's house in this agitated and alarmed state, and some one asked the preacher to call and see him, which he did, and found a fine looking man seated and evidently under much emotion, his chest moving heavily.

The preacher said to him, "*This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.*" (1 Tim. i. 15.)

"I daresay it's all true enough what you say," he replied, "but Christ will have nothing to do with me; I'm too bad a fellow for Him." The preacher added, "Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came to seek and to save that which was *lost*, even 'the chief of sinners.' He died for sinners. Such was His grace, that in order to save them from the curse of the law which they had broken, He bore the curse in His own blessed person. God will now receive you, if you accept Jesus, and trust in Him as your Saviour."

"Yes, but you don't know," said he, "how bad a fellow I am. For twenty years I have not entered a church, or read a word of the Bible, or any good book; and in the worst crew of wicked sailors that I ever shipped with, I was so much worse than the rest that they named me 'the ship's devil.' Why, sir, in the midst of a storm, when every plank seemed to tremble as the thunder broke and the lightning played around us, I have stood on the deck and madly cursed Him who sent the storm. No, no! He'll not save *me*."

The preacher only added, "*Jesus* came to save real sinners, even the chief; His blood can wash the foulest clean;" and then said good night. He did not tell him to *pray* for mercy, but rather to *believe* in a mercy already provided in the Lord Jesus Christ. The fountain was there, and he was to be shewn its waters rather than be told to ask.

The next evening there was preaching again, and he was present, and heard the same gospel as the night before, of present, perfect, and eternal salvation, through simply trusting in the person and precious blood of Christ. The following morning while the preacher was at breakfast with his host, just before leaving the town, the door-bell rang, and the servant, who was a believer, came in and said,—

"Samuel Miller is at the door, sir; and he told me to say, that he loves the preacher better than the preacher loves him." The message was easily interpreted, and he was shewn in. "Oh, my dear sir!" said he, "I'm not the sailor you saw on Tuesday night, I'm another man—*a new man*. I heard the good news again last night, and my heart was opened

to receive it, but the peace and joy didn't come just then. After we went home, one deeply interested for me, said, 'Let us pray together;' and so he prayed, and then I prayed; and as we rose from our knees, I found myself filled with peace and joy. And when I went to bed—no! bed indeed!—I didn't go to bed—who'd think of going to bed on such a night as this? But I went up to my room, and there I rejoiced and gave thanks to the Lord for my salvation. But all at once I thought—'Ah! but is it possible—all those dreadful sins of so many years gone—and in a moment?' And I turned round and said, 'Ah, Satan, that's you is it? Come, come, you've had your way long enough. Yes! they are all forgiven; for 'the blood of Jesus Christ God's Son cleanseth from all sin.' So the old enemy had heard enough, and he fled. My dear sir, I feel as light as a cork; why I could clear that table at a spring with only one hand upon it. Why, there are *two of us here now!* striking himself on the breast—"Yes, *two of us*, one holding with the Lord, and the other still holding with the devil. Even this morning, that one that holds with the devil said, 'Come, Sam, let's put on our hat, and take a stroll;' but the other said, directly, 'No, no, Samuel, we'll go and see the servant of Christ, and tell him what the Lord has done for us.' So here I came. Oh! how I should like to be able to go and tell my old shipmates that Christ has *sought* me and *found* me; and tell them about *Him*. But there! I suppose I must stay, and have my own faith and hope strengthened, and know more about the Lord, before I try my hand at that; but I can pray for them."

It was then said to him, "Samuel, you are indeed saved by grace; and now the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, teacheth us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and —" "Oh, yes!" interrupted he, "Why the grace of God has been talking to me all this morning about that, just like a father would talk to his child. It said to me, 'Samuel, my boy, we have no more now to do with the old ways. It is our business now to please Christ and to follow Him.'"

That night the profligate sailor, "the ship's devil," was enabled to believe in Jesus Christ the Son of God; and *in believing* he received the knowledge of salvation full and free. He was translated out of the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Oh! glorious translation—wondrous change! A brand plucked out of the fire."

After four days the gospel was again preached by the same individual at a neighbouring village, about four miles distant, and Samuel was present, and he did indeed look like another man, not at all like the rough sailor seen but a few days before. Some Christians gathered around him after the preaching, and asked him some questions, and he, in his quaint way, said, "I don't know, I am sure; for I'm *only four days old*."

Speaking after the manner of men he was now about 30 years of age, but he was reckoning from his *second* birth, which had only just transpired. From this time he lived in the power of the *new life* begotten in him; following faithfully the Lord who had redeemed him at such a cost.

The Christian servant who came to the door and con-

veyed the message to the preacher, as before stated, at length became his wife. After their marriage they resided at Bridgewater, he still pursuing a seafaring life. From being a common sailor he rose to be mate of a schooner in the coasting trade. One day the weather being calm and all right on deck, he and the captain were both below, he said to him, "Captain, shall we read a chapter, and have a little prayer?" "With all my heart, mate," was the reply. So they read and prayed; and as they were seated Samuel looked across the table and said, "Captain, are you a son?" "Ah," said he, as to that, I can't say that I am a *son*." "Then you are an enemy," said Samuel. "No, mate," said he, "I know that I am no longer an enemy." "Then you're a *son*," was the reply. The captain soon learnt that he was a *son*, and he and the mate often spent happy seasons together in speaking of the grace of the Lord Jesus and His precious blood, by which they were both saved.

As that in which he was employed was a coasting trade he was frequently in port, and had opportunities of spending some happy seasons by his own fireside, and in the midst of his family. He had two sons and two daughters, and was also kind to his aged parents, who were now greatly comforted by him, though at one time he had caused them so much sorrow and anguish. Instead of mate at length he became captain, and was commanding a vessel in which he was part owner, or had some share in it. On the 28th of December, 1859, while crossing from Newport, in Monmouthshire, to Pembroke, he encountered a heavy storm, was driven on the West Helwick Sands, near

Port Madoc, and all hands on board were lost, in sight of a vessel called "Affiance," belonging to Port Madoc. Thus ended the short but bright career of one who knew in his own case that where sin abounded grace did much more abound. His last passage for him was the best and quickest he had ever made, it was from earth to heaven—absent from the body, present with the Lord. He left a widow and four children, all of whom have been graciously cared for. On the 21st of January, 1867, it pleased the Lord to take to Himself the mother also, leaving the orphans here still, that they too may taste and see that the Lord is good.

Captian Samuel Miller was born on the 28th of January, 1824, at Capland, in the parish of Broadway, near Ilminster. The first 30 years of his life were spent in the service of Satan, and had he been cut off in the midst of his sin during that period, he would have been eternally lost; but God, in His infinite goodness and mercy, plucked him as a brand from the burning, and the residue of his life, about six years, was spent in His fear, until he entered into the rest that remaineth for the people of God at the close of the year 1859.

Reader, *are you saved or unsaved?* If still unsaved turn this very day to Jesus. Cast yourself into the arms of that loving Saviour. He will receive you, forgive you, bless you, and make you eternally happy. Don't trifle with conviction. Be in earnest. If you despise this message of mercy, you know not but that you may be in hell before another sun goes down. God grant that this may not be your awful doom! Come, for all things are ready, and whosoever will may come. Jesus has

purchased a full and eternal salvation for every one who will receive it. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. vi. 2.) He is waiting that He may be gracious, and He declares, "Him that cometh to me I will in *no wise* cast out." (John. vi 37.)

COMPLETE IN CHRIST.

COLOSSIANS ii. 16, 17.

He that has the Lord Jesus Christ has all things; he wants nothing in addition. "Ye are complete," writes Paul to the Colossian believers, "filled up in *Him*." And this apart from all ordinances, ceremonies, religious acts whatever. Christ has died. The One in whom dwelt, and dwelleth, all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; who is the spring, the source of all good and blessing; the Eternal, the ever living God; Son of the Father; brightness of glory; outshining of God; the only One in whom God could be seen manifested. He, the Word, has been made flesh. He was the origin, the Maker, Creator of all things. Man was upright, reflecting God in his first estate, as far as creature could reflect His Maker, representing God, too, here below, as having dominion over the lower sphere, but all that was lost because he kept not his subject state: he did not obey; the only condition becoming a creature towards God. Transgression was ruin—the fall. Then the Lord God spake, traced the evil to its root, and judged it. (Gen. iii.) The woman's seed was the hope, the promise He spoke of. Christ was to come in the fulness of time. The Redeemer—all God's counsels

centred in Him, all man's hopes. Infinite wisdom this—infinite love. To know Christ, therefore, is every thing that man requires; and in this knowledge increasing ever, as it should be in the believer, is the truest happiness and peace. Christ is the Object set before the soul by God Himself—Christ in His person and in His work. Man thinks of his religion; God tells man of his sin—of his ruin. Man needs a Saviour *from* sin and ruin, and in Christ there *is* one—the seed of the woman. The cross is the expression of His love, His love unto death, devoting Himself as the sinner's substitute, to die the sinner's death, that man might live, and live in glory. Not indeed in his old life, for that was forfeited by sin, but in a new life, communicated by God the Holy Ghost, breathed from a risen, sent by an ascended Jesus, now at God's right hand in heaven. For this blessed One, the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord, is the *substance* which God has to offer, and does offer, for the food of His people, and that in contradistinction to, and beyond and above all ordinances, rites, and ceremonies whatever. In Judaism these things had their places as *shadows*; they were ordained of God Himself, and right and proper for their day. They were imposed on a particular nation, who were strictly kept under them. They pointed to One that was to come, the hope of Israel, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour. At the time appointed God sent Him into the world—His own beloved Son; sent Him to Israel. They knew Him not, they crucified Him, they would not have Him to reign over them. But His death was eternal life to millions, it was the great sacrifice for sin, it was the *atonement*. Here the Holy Ghost would

fix the sinner's gaze—on Calvary. “Behold the man,” the man Christ Jesus! I do not think that Pilate said it. (John xix.) Read the 5th verse without his name. The Lord presented *Himself*, and, blessed for us poor Gentiles, He does so still. “Behold me, behold mine,” is His word to a people that *was not* called by His name.

“O grace divine! the Saviour shed
His life-blood on the cursed tree,
Bowed on the cross His sacred head,
And died to make His people free.”

“He that sitteth upon the circles of the earth, the inhabitants whereof are as grasshoppers, the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity,” became a man, and died *for* men—for sinners. Do I repeat this too often? I want men to *think*. What must be the value of such an offering? Who would dare put anything beside it, couple anything with it as the ground of confidence before God? None who know themselves; and such are not tired of hearing of Jesus and His blood. But what becomes of shadows? In the light of eternity they vanish, and *must* vanish. God causes them that love Him to inherit *substance*, and He invites souls now to a substantial feast. In giving Christ He has given everything; and Christ *is* everything to the believer. Talk you of meat? He is the *living* bread that came down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. “My flesh is meat indeed,” He says. Of drink? “My blood is drink indeed.” “Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.” (John vi.) The shedding of that blood was the full, the complete atonement for sin. Whosoever looks at it, drinks of it by

faith, is saved, and saved for ever. God so values the atonement made by His Son, He is so satisfied about sin thereby, that He forgives *all trespasses, has forgiven* all trespasses, to the one who believes in the Lord Jesus. I do not mean the cold historical belief that hundreds profess, but that which Romans x. speaks of: "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." Righteousness is upon the believer. Christ is his righteousness; he needs no other, he *has* no other. Talk you of an holy day? Christ is the substance of them all. New moons, sabbaths, all had their answer, and have it still, in Him. He is the beginning of months—new life from the dead; He is the resurrection; He is the eternal life; He is the rest. God rests in Him, and man may rest. "Come unto me," we hear Him saying, "all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." O that the still small voice may penetrate many hearts weary with the din, and the clamour, and the confusion all around. There *is* rest in Jesus. There is perfection in the Christ of God. Life and salvation, peace and blessedness, rest now and for eternity, all are in Him for "whosoever will." The river of the water of life flows freely down. The blessed One still speaks from heaven. That same Jesus who went up in triumph from His work of love calls to the nations, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth."

FRIENDSHIP is one thing, the fellowship of God's habitation another.

The truth of the Lord's second coming tests the heart, and shews where the affections are.

“HE IS OUR PEACE.”

JESUS gives a full redemption,
 He is our peace;
From all judgment we've exemption,
 He is our peace.
As poor sinners He received us,
From sin's burden He relieved us,
From the chains of Satan freed us,
 He is our peace.

Now *this* is our consolation,
 He is our peace;
And we *rest* in His salvation,
 He is our peace.
Though this world may seek to charm us,
Though the devil try to harm us,
'Gainst it all this word must arm us,
 He is our peace.

'Tis *His* peace the Saviour giveth;
 He is our peace.
Now at God's right hand He liveth,
 He is our peace.
Troubles thicken fast around us,
Many mighty foes surround us,
None of these shall e'er confound us,
 He is our peace.

Peace it is past understanding;
 He is our peace.
Though we sorrow, notwithstanding
 He is our peace.
All that grieves Him we are shunning,
In the race we're gladly running,
Watching *daily* for His coming,
 He is our peace.

SHORT NOTES ON DANIEL.

No. 7.

CHAPTER VI. The crowning act of iniquity at the close of this dispensation will be man's taking to himself the place of God (2 Thess. ii. 4; Rev. xiii.; and Dan. xi. 36-39), and extorting from others as his right and title that which is due to God alone. We find it so here; it is the especial characteristic of the chapter; for Darius's conduct is but a foreshadowing of the way in which man will thus exalt himself.

If Belshazzar on the one hand is a type of the corrupt thing called Babylon, Darius on the other prefigures the revived head of the Roman empire, as we find him in Rev. xiii. and xvii. Note the beautiful accuracy of Scripture. In Rev. xvii. "the beast" is seen assuming his full character on the destruction of the corrupt woman, or Babylon; not before. So here. What brings Darius into authority is the judgment on Belshazzar and Babylon.

It is not that he personally was a more degraded character; on the contrary. But Scripture uses him as a figure of the power which, for a short time, will triumph in the latter days; and during whose reign the people of God will be in such dire distress, no man being allowed to buy or sell save he who has his mark. (Rev. xiii. 17.)

These two then, Belshazzar and Darius, represent in their conduct those evil principles which, through the whole course of this world's history, have been going hand in hand, and are yet to have their full development. Corruption in Belshazzar's case, violence in

that of Darius, and which have ever marked man's history, take it any way you will. They are allowed by God to come to a climax at "the time of the end," but in order only to meet their final judgment.

Verses six and seven especially mark this chapter. It is not idolatry, nor is it a direct insult offered to the Lord; but it is the exaltation of man himself, who would shut out all idea of God, putting himself in His place.

Thus they acted in making the decree; for by declaring that for thirty days none should ask a petition of any god or man save of the king, they virtually denied the rights of God—assumed His place, giving the honour due to Him alone to man. All this is very solemn, very important for us to lay hold of; for what, we may well ask, will be the end of these so-called "rights of man" that we now hear so much about? where will it all lead? Why to this very thing—men doing without God, or wanting to do without Him; seeking to have the earth for themselves. So here a law is sought to be made whereby for thirty days no request is to be asked of any one but the king; he alone is to be acknowledged; the rights of God must stand aside; His claims be entirely shut out. "Vain man would be wise." The king, deceived through his own vanity, finds himself really bound by laws which, while outwardly acknowledging the immutability of his will, really bound him down; for "the law of the Medes and Persians altereth not."

Hence his inferiority to Nebuchadnezzar, who had supreme power—able to make one day and unmake the next; and thus the difference in their description. One

is distinguished by the head of gold, the other by the body of silver.

To be immutable in the will is what belongs to God alone. Their conduct in this matter then was an usurpation of His rights.

But mark Daniel's course. How beautiful it is! What a contrast to that of the king and princes! They assuming, in their pride and self-will, the rights and place of God; he, forgetful of self and every thing around him, has one and only one desire, and that is the glory of his God.

Though now an aged man, faith is still as strong as ever; and God's past dealings, instead of exalting the flesh, have only served to cast His beloved servant more wholly and entirely upon Him.

Daniel is one who is walking with God—who has already proved Him. His eye is single, and consequently there is no hesitation about his path. When everything is settled,—the law signed so as to be unchangeable,—he goes into his house, and there three times a day before the open windows looking towards Jerusalem—God's earthly centre—“he prays and gives thanks as he did aforetime.”

All this is very precious for us. At all costs, no matter how great, God's rights must be acknowledged, and that publicly too, at the open window even, when the occasion demands it. There must be no doubt left on the mind of any as to whom Daniel would acknowledge as the supreme and only God,—the Jehovah of Israel, or Darius the Mede.

His faithfulness, however, soon sets all doubt on the matter at rest, and the king, by reason of his own

laws, is unable to deliver him ; “he laboured till the going down of the sun” to do so, but in vain.

Poor man ! “snared in the work of his own hands.” The law of the Medes and Persians cannot be revoked, and Daniel is cast into the den of lions. There, however, their power ends. Man may kill the body ; it is all he can do. But God now comes in to show that the earth and all creation are as much His as the heavens themselves. He closes the mouths of the lions. That which apparently was certain death to Daniel, becomes, as it were, the source of a new life to him.

All this is a figure of the depth into which His people will be brought in the latter days,—those of them at least who are faithful,—even to the very “dust of death ;” but there they will find that One has been before them into the “lion’s mouth” (Psa. xxii. 21)—has trod the path down to its very depths, and when there, borne the judgment due to them to the uttermost, therefore they can go free, and the violent dealing reserved for them by the wicked will return on their own head (Psa. vii. 16) ; and of those who are spared “I will make them to come and worship at thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee” is the testimony of Scripture concerning that of which this chapter is a figure.

The result here (*v.* 26) is greater even than in Nebuchadnezzar’s case ; for Darius commands that in every place the God of Daniel and of Israel should be acknowledged as the only living and true God, whose kingdom was for ever and ever.

And such is the character of the confession that will

come from those who remain after the judgments have been poured out that now hang over Christendom.

The leaders of the nation who had been instrumental in devising a means for Daniel's destruction fell into the pit themselves which they had digged for him, while he, delivered and restored to his former honours,—type of Israel in the latter days,—“prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.”

LIFE IS SHORT.

1 PETER i. 24, 25.

Life is short, and man is frail ;
To the blast he soon must yield,
Like the flower that decks the field ;
Life is short, and man is frail.

Man, alas, to woe is born ;
He a weight of sorrow bears,
He a wreath of cypress wears ;
Man, alas, to woe is born.

Look, O man, to Christ the Son,
There is pleasure, peace, and rest ;
Thou in Him mayst now be blest ;
Look, O man, to Christ the Son.

Bliss and endless life are thine,
Soon as Him thou dost receive ;
Dost thou on the Son believe ?
Life and blessing, then, are thine.

SCRIPTURE QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

How can the judgment-seat of Christ, at which the Christian will appear, be reconciled with the parable of the talents?—
Anon.

Our mistake is to attempt to reconcile the various lines of

divine truth. It has been one of the most fruitful sources of controversy. The Scripture is given to us to believe. The fifth chapter of the second epistle to the Corinthians states the fact, that "we" who "know that we have a building of God," and are "always confident," must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ to receive of the things done in the body." We know that we shall have had our glorified bodies before that, and see fully with the Lord in all things. It is a question, not of salvation, but of stewardship.

We believe that the parable of the talents teaches, that all who *profess* to be the Lord's servants will be judged. It will then be manifest, that the use the nominal professor has made of Christ's name has been only for earthly purposes. He buried his talent in the earth. He had no eye to the Lord's glory. Such persons will then be stripped, and the name of Christian, which they have so misused, will be taken away from them and given to the faithful. Never having tasted the grace of God, or known the Saviour's loving heart, they will be for ever banished from His presence.

What will be the position of those Christians, when the Lord comes, who have not been looking for Him?—B.

We ought not to make light of a Christian being ignorant of any part of the truth God has graciously revealed for our blessing. Nor should it be regarded otherwise than a most solemn matter for any one professing to be Christ's, to refuse the truth of His coming again for His saints. But though Christians fail, the Lord will not. He abideth faithful. He cannot deny Himself. He will fulfil His gracious word, "I will come again and receive you unto myself." It is true that the Scripture says, "*To them that look for Him* shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (Heb. ix. 28.) But Scripture also says, that "*they that are Christ's*" will be raised at His coming. When the truth is clearly apprehended that the Church is a body united to Christ the head in heaven, it will easily be seen that when the meeting actually takes place in the air, not one of those could be omitted of whom the Holy Ghost now says, "We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones."

FORGIVENESS OF SINS, LIFE, AND CHRIST'S SUFFICIENCY.

2 KINGS iv.

THE stories related in this portion of God's word, read in the light of the New Testament, teach us of forgiveness and life for the sinner, and of Christ's sufficiency for the believer.

The widow's oil is a proverb of exhaustless supply, and is a fit emblem of divine grace. The empty vessels in her house illustrate needy hearts; for so long as there was one vessel to be filled, whether large or small, the oil stayed not. Well may we say of our need, whatever it be, God's grace can meet it, and, in a sense, the greater our need, the more is God's grace magnified by meeting it; the larger the vessel, the more wonderful seemed the little jar of oil as the widow poured out. How her poor heart would rise up blessing Jehovah as she saw vessel after vessel filled as full as each could hold with the ceaseless oil!

But how came the widow to know the richness of the pot of oil? Her sons were about to be sold for debt. She had no possible way of delivering herself or them; her creditor was at the door; and having "nothing to pay," the bondsman's fate was before her eyes. It was in her depths of distress that the poor bankrupt betook herself to Elisha, the man of God, from whom she learned that (as Elisha's name signifies) God is salvation!

Lesson of all lessons the sweetest to learn in the heart—God is salvation! Do we need forgiveness of

the debt of our sins? Do we owe the five hundred pence, or the fifty? God is salvation! When the debtors had "nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both." Look well over your religious stores, dear fellow-sinner; what have you left? If your answer be, "I am destitute; not one good work, not one worthy desire, not one holy prayer—no; should justice put in its claim, I am hopelessly lost; I must be sold into endless captivity,"—then be it with you as with the widow; for there is—bless God for it!—still the pot of oil, still His boundless grace to meet all your need. Your need called forth His grace.

God forgives us our sins upon the principle of grace, through Jesus, who shed His blood. Let none think that God's salvation is mere kindness. Kindness it is indeed to love us as He does; but righteousness as well as kindness is to be found in God's forgiveness, since it is alone in Jesus that we obtain forgiveness—alone in Him who died for our sins—alone by His precious blood—"In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." (Eph. i. 7.)

God can now forgive, and yet uphold His own righteousness. Yes, the cross, the blood of His dear Son, testifies to God's holiness as nothing else can; for were He to punish every sinner for ever, even that would not show His hatred of sin as does the blood of His Son. Moreover, since Jesus has paid the debt, God's righteousness is shown out by His forgiving guilty sinners who trust in Jesus and in His blood.

We invite you, dear sinner, to partake of God's grace, to believe according to His word, and for ever to be freed from the creditor.

But the widow found somewhat beyond having her debts paid in God's grace toward her. She had *more than enough*. After her debts were paid, there was still a fund of riches in her hand. What was she to do with it? "Live upon it," was the divine word. Live in the famine-stricken land upon the unmerited bounty of God! Very precious to the saved sinner's heart is the knowledge that he is not only saved by grace, but that so long as he tarries in this sin-stricken world—a world where there is a mighty famine for all that sustains the soul—he has God's grace to live upon!

Dear friend, do not let us shut up God's grace to the bare fact of the forgiveness of sins. Just suppose the poor widow and her sons freed from the creditor's hand—saved from bondage, yet without a penny to carry them through the years of famine. What a mercy to be saved, we might say; yes, but would such a salvation answer to the character of God? Far from it. And while we are verily saved from all our sins, each one being for ever forgiven when we believe in Him who died for us, there is also a boundless supply for each hour of our lives; there is a fulness which our wants can never exhaust, and the Lord delights in our making Him our resource at all times, drawing from His treasury, so that we may say, "Of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace, [grace heaped on grace]." (John i. 16.)

Again, fellow-sinner, we would ask you, Are your sins forgiven? Do you know the grace of God? Do you believe in Jesus who died for our redemption? And if you are saved, then do you trust in God for

every day, for the future and for the present, as well as the past? There are some—and we speak of forgiven sinners—who know no more of the grace of God than that He has saved their souls. They do not realize His grace for every day in this famine-stricken world.

Accept God's grace for the payment of your debts, and live upon the rest. May the blessed Spirit make you to know *grace*.

II. LIFE.

Shall we stop at forgiveness? Shall we stop at that grace which follows us to the end of our earthly journey? Is the Christian only like a ransomed prisoner with a fund of riches to meet all his wants to the day of his death? Far be the thought; we are much more than forgiven; we are the *possessors of everlasting life*. "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. vi. 23.) Jesus not only died for our sins; He rose for our justification. His blood blotted out our countless crimes; He is our life. Bad as it is to be in debt, it is worse to be dead. And we are by nature "dead in trespasses and sins." If we are saved by God's salvation, it is both forgiveness and life for us.

The fond mother of Shunam had death in her house; the child of her desires lay upon his bed lifeless. Who could meet this extremity? Who but the living God could give life? Life is God's gift. When Adam was formed out of the dust, God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. (Gen. ii. 7.) Not the hardest strivings, the

bitterest tears, could give back her son's life, and this she knew full well; but she knew more,—she knew that Elisha, Jehovah's servant, if it were Jehovah's will, could bring back her child to life. She had faith in God.

Have you faith, dear reader? Can you say, while looking into your dead nature, "It is well?" knowing that God raiseth the dead. The Shunammite went straight to Jehovah's prophet. "Drive, and go forward," she said; "slack not thy riding for me." This was the energy of faith. And when Elisha inquired how it was with her, she said, in the calmness of faith, "It is well."

The prophet came to her child, as God's salvation comes to us, down to the very place where he was. Elisha lay upon the dead child; his mouth, his hands, touched the lifeless body. But Jesus has taken our place actually, our very place; He died on the cross, He went down into the grave for us. Have you considered His stoop—from the glory to the grave? Have you pondered His work—the maker of all worlds as a man lying dead in the tomb? It is only by Him that we obtain life: "*The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*" His blood cleanses all our sins away; His death ends our sinful nature.

We see the little chamber where the dead child lies, and our God alone can raise him up. Why should it be so difficult to believe that God alone gives dead sinners new and everlasting life? The answer is not far off; it lies in the hardness of our hearts, that find it so difficult to believe that we are dead in trespasses and sins.

Beloved soul, if you only felt what your nature is—a dead thing in the sight of God; therefore hopelessly beyond repair—you would, like the Shunammite at Carmel, have but one cry, “Life, life!”

But how am I to obtain life, do you ask? We get life from God Himself; He gives us life by His Spirit, and the life is Christ. If you believe, you have life; as it is written, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life.” (John v. 24.) And again, “He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” (1 John v. 12.) Oh, beloved reader, if thou knewest the love of God! (John iv. 17.) May His Spirit by the word quicken your dead soul! Would to God you knew what salvation is!—absolute and everlasting forgiveness by the precious blood of Christ; life everlasting; Christ Himself being your life.

The joy of the mother, when she clasped her child—the living, the living—in her bosom, was deeper than the rich joy of her who had the money in her hand to pay her debts, and deliver her sons from bondage; and surely there is a fuller joy when we know the gift of God, which is eternal life, than even when we know that we are forgiven all our sins by the precious blood.

It is quite true that we may have to lay down these bodies in the grave; still it is only the body that falls asleep: those who believe in the Lord Jesus “never die.” (John xi.)

III. CHRIST'S SUFFICIENCY.

However blessed it is to be assured of our forgive-

ness, and to know that we have in Christ everlasting life, yet there is somewhat beyond this that belongs to God's people.

The world is another place to a man immediately he knows Jesus; and heaven, too, becomes also another place to him; the world in his eyes is desolation; heaven—home. But whether the believer regards himself as a pilgrim travelling homewards through a scene of desolation, or whether he realizes his position in heaven in Christ, he equally needs the sufficiency, the sustaining, of Jesus Himself.

There is a famine on earth, and let the believer turn which way soever he will, there is not a particle of nourishment for his soul to be gathered from the earth; but the whole of his spiritual food is heavenly, the bread, which is Christ Himself. At the present time, man gathers for his need—as did the sons of the prophets in the dearth—what their hands may find; each goes to search for some good and pleasant thing. But sooner or later comes the woeful discovery that death has spoilt the sweetest things; and then, *when the discovery is made by the soul as touching his own case*, he is fain to cry out with the sons of the prophets, “O man of God, there is death in the pot.” Death in the pleasantest, in the loveliest, in the dearest things of earth; death in the family; death beneath the rosy cheek of childhood; death within the frame of strong manhood; death upon the grey hairs of age; death in business; death in the household; death everywhere, in everything, on earth. Heart-breaking discovery! Oh! who can eat of the things of life and earth! who can endure its sorrows! “O man of

God, there is death in the pot, and they could not eat thereof."

And how came death into the world? Sin entered, and death by sin,—which knowledge, when the heart that hates sin discovers it as applied to itself, is bitter, bitter indeed.

Then where is the remedy? How shall we go through life's sorrows and tears? The man of God gives the sons of the prophets the remedy. "Is there death?" "*Then bring meal.*" Now meal is a figure of Christ as a man on earth; and when we know Him in His tenderness and sympathy, when we consider Him who has gone through every bitter sorrow that human heart ever felt, then as the sons of the prophets could eat of the food which had death in it (for when the meal was put into the poisoned food, there was "no harm" in it), so can we pass through all the bitter things of our earthly way and find them sweet; yes, all sweet which once was bitter, when Jesus is known. Pain, sorrow, death,—all, all sweet.

Beloved fellow Christian, know you Jesus thus as with you in all the circumstances of life? have you found His love and presence make everything sweet?

Yet, dear Christian, there is more in Christ than a sweetening of your bitter circumstances, more than friendship and sympathy for you as a tried soul on earth; for Jesus is not here any longer, His feet have left this weary scene; you may trace the imprint of His steps as the Holy Ghost has recorded them in God's word, but Jesus Himself is risen. He has passed through death, and has reached the land of glory; He has left the sorrowful land, and has sat down in the

home of unmixed joy; and His fulness in that rich place is yours.

The sons of the prophets ate of the loaves of the firstfruits and left thereof, according to the word of the Lord God. There was an abundance in the supply which went beyond their need; for the supply was after Jehovah's measure.

The loaves of the firstfruits, the earnest of the harvest, the promise of coming abundance, tell us of our risen Lord. Christ the firstfruits (1 Cor. xv 23) is evidence of the end of the famine. Upon Him let us now feed our souls, and, feeding spiritually upon our risen Lord Jesus, know by the power of His Spirit of that fulness which far exceeds our earthly wants, which is exhaustless, which is heavenly, after the measure of the love, and grace, and power of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“IS NOT THIS A BRAND PLUCKED OUT OF
THE FIRE?”

Zech. ii. iii.

In the vision recorded in these chapters, the prophet Zechariah is shown the purposes of God's love towards His sinful and suffering people, and the means whereby He can reinstate them in His favour according to the claims of His righteousness. It is the history of the salvation and justification of every saved sinner; and the believer can see the same ways of grace in this ancient prophecy as he has been the happy subject of in his day.

Often we read the third chapter by itself, and thus rob

the vision of much of its divine beauty. The need of the sinner is met in the third chapter, but the heart of God is declared in the second; and the action in chap. iii. is the removal of every obstacle to the fulfilment of God's own blessed thoughts about His people in chap. ii.

Zechariah had made known the sad burden of the people's sins, and had beheld the horns that God had sent to scatter Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem. (ch. i. 19.) He had seen the end of the people in judgment; and doubtless his heart was deeply moved at the judgment he announced; but thus he became a vessel fitted to receive the consolations of God. The sense of man's ruin is needed to appreciate God's grace. Surely we need to learn more truly what sin is, and what it has done, that we may value more the grace whereby we are saved.

Zechariah again lifts up his eyes, and he sees no longer the horns of scattering and destruction, but a messenger of salvation—a man with a measuring-line in his hand, on his way to the desolate city, where no man dwelt. God's thoughts have gone forth—thoughts of peace, and not of evil. He yearns over His captives: He must restore them to their land. His word declares to the young man, that "Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls, for the multitude of men and cattle." Thus faith can sing, through days of sorrow, All will be well!

God has not cast away the people whom He foreknew. Read the chapter, and see if the blessings promised do not far exceed the blessings of Solomon's reign, which Israel forfeited by sin. We want our hearts enlarged in the love of God, and filled with the

glory of His salvation, when we carry the gospel to sinners. Have we not God's thoughts of love to declare, as well as God's remedy for sin? Is it not well to lift up our eyes and learn the lengths, and breadths, and depths, and heights, passing knowledge, of redeeming love? and, as we go forth to the poor perishing world, to have before our minds that God is going to people heaven with redeemed sinners? He is about to surround Himself with the spoil of His great enemy, and we are to learn what the young man with the measuring-line was told, who purposed measuring Jerusalem, that no thoughts of grace and mercy in our hearts can rise to the magnificence of God's thoughts; so that we may well exclaim, in the sense of our poverty, and the exceeding greatness of God's love, Who is sufficient for these things? "Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord: for He is raised up out of His holy habitation." "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Thus, being in communion with the Lord and His purposes of love towards Jerusalem, the prophet is shown, in chap. iii., all that stood in the way of these purposes of God. Satan, the great enemy of souls, is seen resisting Joshua, who represents Jerusalem. And what can such an one as Joshua in his filthy garments say in the presence of God? How can he answer the accuser? We behold him speechless and self-condemned, with his mouth shut, before God. It is there the light of the gospel brings the sinner, when it enters his heart. He is before God in all his pollution, and Satan is there to resist him: as before, in his

careless hours, Satan was at his side to seduce him. It is well to estimate the solemnity of such a position, and to ask one's self, Have I ever been thus before God as a polluted sinner, fit only for the place prepared for the devil and his angels? Such is the place where God displays Himself in sovereign grace.

He answers Satan, and all the guilty fears of the sinner, by declaring His right to do as He pleases, and to choose, if He please, a worthless brand, and pluck it out of the burning. Satan resisted Joshua on the plea of his pollution; and it is just on that ground that the Lord silences him. If God wills to people heaven with the spoil of Satan's kingdom, who is he that shall say nay to Him? And what else is salvation, if it is not God saving by grace those who are by nature children of wrath? If one cannot declare this as God's good means, without addition or limitation, surely such an one has yet to learn what God's salvation is.

This being God's sovereign will, He (the Lord) turns to the polluted Joshua, and removes from him those filthy garments, pronouncing, in accordance to the demands of His holiness and righteousness, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." Was it a matter of Joshua's appropriation? Nay; the justification was solely and entirely of God. In the gospel God has declared how He is just in thus justifying the ungodly. It is through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth a propitiation, through faith in His blood. (Rom. ii.) Mark those words: "Whom God hath set forth." The sinner has not to

present Christ, or offer Christ to God, or plead the merits of His blood. God has set Him forth. God declares His righteousness. The sinner who hears the glad tidings as Joshua did, in God's presence, with Satan silenced at his right hand by those tidings, has the joy of knowing that God has justified him, and caused his iniquity to pass from him ; and for the vile garments of his sinful nature and condition as a child of wrath, God has clothed him with Christ, and he is made the righteousness of God in Him. What more was needed to complete the picture ? Ah ! some would say, if I could only get as far as the change of clothing, if I could only be assured of my justification by God, I should want no more. But Zechariah had drunk into the purposes of God's love more deeply ; and seeing the justification of the late polluted Joshua, he says, "Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. He asks for his glorification, and he sees Joshua clothed as God's priest in garments of beauty and glory. Beautiful figure of God's ways in salvation ! He not only gives us peace, but gives us to boast in hope of His glory. He makes us meet for His own presence, who were in His sight "brands in the fire." It was for this end that He rebuked Satan and justified Joshua ; and having brought him to Himself into the holiest, as the High Priest, He charges him to walk in His ways. There can be no walking with God until we have met Him ; and while our consciences are unpurged by the blood of Christ, we have not met Him.

My reader, if you have not met God, remember you are away from Him, and under His wrath as a sinner who does not believe in His only begotten Son. How

can you stand in the judgment? How can you answer the adversary? How blessed to be in God's presence, with our mouth shut, and our ear open, to hear His good news. "By Jesus Christ all that believe are justified from all things" (Acts xiii.), and receiving His word in the simplicity of faith, enjoy the priceless treasure of peace with God. Then are we in a position to learn the thoughts and purposes of His redeeming love, and then only can we really walk in His ways.

SHORT NOTES ON DANIEL.

CHAPTER VII.

CHAPTER vii. commences the second division of the book. The first part, as we have seen, is taken up especially with the conduct of the Gentile powers towards God; the second, which we now enter upon, treats more particularly of their conduct towards one another. It is no longer the dreams of Nebuchadnezzar, but of Daniel himself, with an interpretation in which we find fuller and more explicit details than in the dream.

The chief object in the chapter is the relation of the history of the fourth beast, or last form that the Gentile monarchy assumes. We have already seen in chapter ii. the divine establishment of this power, with its origin under Nebuchadnezzar, and how it had to go through four stages of existence, the last of which would be ended by judgment coming from heaven in the person of the "Son of man," figured by the stone that was cut out of the mountain without hands falling on the image, making it as the chaff of the summer

threshing-floor, and then filling the earth. The reason of their being described as beasts has also been looked at in chapter iv. It is as such that we have them here again—but with special marks on each, indicative of the character of their kingdom.

The first beast, &c., is the result of the four winds striving on the great sea. Rev. xvii. 15 and Jer. li. 13 explain the symbol of the sea as being the waves of human population not definitely consolidated; the earth on the other hand is descriptive of that which is already formed and established. We should note here that there is nothing directly addressed to the people of God, because, as such, they were not acknowledged; hence everything is to Daniel individually, and he represents in his own person the faithful remnant of Israel in the latter days who will be standing for God and His truth, while the power which this chapter describes is at its height of violence and corruption.

We may divide the chapter into three parts in connection with the three visions which are the subjects of it. The first vision from verse 1 to 6; the second, from verse 7 to 12; the third, verses 13 and 14.

The first vision is descriptive of the three first beasts, who pass away almost as rapidly as they came into existence. From verse 12 we find that though losing their power as beasts, they are not entirely destroyed at that time, but continue for a period as kingdoms, though not of any importance. Greece and Persia, the second and third beasts, as we shall see further on, existing to this day.

The second vision is the history of the fourth beast, or last form assumed by the Gentile monarchy.

The third vision is the opposite of it all, being the dominion given to the "Son of man."

The first beast, then, comes out of the sea, and is descriptive of Babylon under the dominion of Nebuchadnezzar,—the courage and power of a lion, with the ability of rising higher than others on the eagle's wings, are fitting symbols of the greatest kingdom that as yet has existed in the earth. But it did not last, as we have seen. For the impiety of Belshazzar the wings were plucked off; that is, Darius the Mede takes the city, which henceforth loses the chief place among the nations, though still retaining some of its former grandeur, much intelligence and learning being found in it, as we would learn from the latter part of verse 4; but after a second siege, brought on, according to secular history, by a rebellion of its inhabitants, it gradually decays, till at length the voices of the prophets are fulfilled, and it "becomes heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant." (Jer. li. 37. Such was the end of the one who once sat upon many waters, a fitting figure of her who is the mother of harlots, and has yet to share the same fate. (Rev. xvii. and xviii.)

The second beast is wanting in the energy and power of the first,—appropriating the kingdoms of others rather than creating one for itself. It is the Medo-Persian, which we have seen already in chapters v. and vi., and of which we need not now say much, as it does not occupy a prominent part in this chapter.

The third beast has the character of a leopard rather than that of a lion—rapidity and subtlety of movement instead of the firm bold tread of the latter. Its

first head was Alexander the great, but the especial features of it belong rather to the kingdoms which succeeded him on his death, when that vast empire was divided by his four generals, with two of whom—Ptolemy and Seleucus—and their descendants we shall have much to say in chapter xi., as they take a prominent part in connection with Israel and the land, being called respectively, from their relative positions towards Palestine, the king of the north and south—types of two powers that are yet to play a most important part ere this age closes.

We now come to the second vision, or history of the fourth beast, which is the grand subject of this chapter, the especial enemy of God and opponent of His saints; hence the description of him is more particular, details being given to warn and guide the people of God who are on the earth during the short period of his final existence,—times when the delusion will be so great, that if it were possible, the very elect would be deceived; but for their sakes these days shall be shortened. (Matt. xxiv. 22.) He is different in every way from the rest, “dreadful, and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it: and it had ten horns.” Then another “little horn” comes up in the midst of these ten, before whom three fall: and in this horn were eyes like a man, and a mouth speaking great things; that is to say, the strength of this beast was divided into ten horns, like the toes of the image in chapter ii.—a horn being the symbol of power in Scripture.

Not only strength but rapacity marked this beast; for it spared nothing, laying hands on everything within its reach. It is in the midst of these ten horns that the little horn arises; first small and insignificant, but soon he assumes the pre-eminence, three of the others falling before him. He is marked by intelligence, design, power of understanding, and discrimination, but with all this he is a boaster and vain-glorious, “a mouth speaking great things.” It is on account of the words which this “little horn” speaks that the beast is slain; for he is the one who morally influences the whole beast, as we have more fully explained in Rev. xvii. 12, 13. These ten horns are of one mind, and give their power to this little horn; thus, while the great mass of the empire is divided into ten parts, he is the chief worker of evil; for we see in him a special power; not merely an ordinary kingdom, but one who raises himself up in the midst of others for his own aggrandizement.

But there is an end to it all. God comes in upon the scene, and what a contrast! The beasts we have been considering rise up out of the sea, flourish for a time, and then pass away, to be succeeded by others; but He is “of old from everlasting,” “the Ancient of days,” the author and source of all things; hence supreme, spite of the pride and boasting of man.

The thrones are then cast down (*v. 9*); that is, in the sense of being set or placed for judgment, not overturned, but the reverse. It is a session of judgment, a solemn scene, characterised by purity and righteousness. In Isaiah i., white as wool is a figure used to express the state of those whose sins are for-

given them. It marks the Judge Himself here—as He is, so are they. His garment was white as snow; such was the promise to them: “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.” It does not say where the thrones are set, but states the fact, and that is the close of the reign of the “little horn” when he is brought to account, and, along with his confederate the false prophet, cast into the lake of fire.” (See Rev. xix.)

And who is this “Ancient of days”? It is Christ. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” The reason that He is not plainly presented, and in accordance with His names as such, is, that in this book our Lord has especially the character of Messiah—as the one who is sent by God to bring in deliverance. But here we find that He is the very Jehovah-Elohim from of old,—a further revelation of Him, and what Israel will yet have to learn through their troubles during the great tribulation, viz., that their Messiah is the very Jehovah who in time past took them out of Egypt, bore them on eagles’ wings, and brought them to Himself. (Ex. xix. 4, 5.) But when He appears, they will find Him, to their shame and sorrow, to be the very One that by wicked hands they had crucified and slain. (Zech. xii.)

SCRIPTURE QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

How may I know that I am a quickened soul, that I am born again—a new creature in creation?—R.H.

You may know this, not by what you *feel*, nor by the *works* you have done, but because you have really submitted to the righteousness of God in Christ—because you have received Christ Jesus the Son of God as your alone ground of justifica-

tion. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." (1 John v. 1.) Resting in God's word is the only true way of assurance.

What is the baptism of the Holy Ghost?—R.H.

It is that action of the Holy Ghost on believers which forms them into one body in Christ. "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." (1 Cor. xii. 13.)

What is it to be complete in Christ? How can I attain and realize that blessedness?—H.

To be complete in Christ is to be filled to the full in Him. It is our present standing. It is not a question of attainment. All believers, whether weak or strong, young or old, are complete in Christ. We realize it by believing the fact which God has revealed to us in His word. He says, "Ye *are* complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power." (Col. ii. 10.)

H. T. (Waterford) writes to know the meaning of the twenty-third verse of Matthew x.—"For ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come."

In this chapter the Lord sends unto the twelve apostles to preach the gospel of the kingdom, and with it to heal the sick, &c. Their ministry was to be confined to Israel. It was a further appeal of the Lord to that nation. "He came unto His own." Had the cities of Israel received their testimony, Messiah was at hand to bring in the kingdom. Their ministry, however, was evidently soon interrupted; for in the twelfth chapter, we read, they go about to destroy Christ, and He pronounces them to be in a hopeless condition—a "generation of vipers." There is, however, no doubt, after the Church is completed, and removed to meet Christ in the air, that a remnant of Israel will resume the same kind of ministry, and that Christ will actually be revealed from heaven before they shall have gone over the cities of Israel.

Which is scriptural, infant or adult baptism, or both?—G.T.

We reply neither. We have believers' baptism in Scripture—"The Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized." (Acts xviii. 8.)

What are we to understand by the "little city, and few men in it," &c., in Eccles. ix. 14, 15?

Does not this parabolic language touchingly describe the fall of man, thus getting under the power of Satan? And is not the "poor wise man" Christ, who alone has wrought deliverance? How lamentably true is it that few seem to remember Him! To the believer, however, how precious it is to be having Him in remembrance! We know who said, "Do this in remembrance of Me."

TO THE MORAL AND VIRTUOUS.

THE inward thought of many, who have been kept from gross manifestations of evil, is that they are better than others whose lives openly declare them to be "publicans and sinners;" and so far as this life is concerned, they are no doubt better members of society, and fulfil their natural obligations with greater propriety and decorum. But have they any room to boast even before men on this account? How much less before God. Is not much of their outward propriety traceable to education, and the influence of favourable circumstances, or of kind and considerate friends? And, after all, do not the outwardly moral spring from the same sinful stock as the most profligate and profane? Have they not been conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity? (Psalm li. 5.) Are not their minds at enmity against God? (Rom. viii. 7.) Have they not sinful hearts, thoughts, and desires? (Genesis vi. 5, viii. 21; Matt. xii. 34; Mark vii. 21-23.) Yes, assuredly; for whatever difference there may be among men, "ALL [without exception] have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. iii. 23.)

The "natural man" can, no doubt, produce *natural* fruit in abundance. He can exhibit skill and intelligence in the things of man, and even show kindness and benevolence to his fellow-creature; but he cannot bring forth fruit *unto* God, for "they that are *in the flesh* cannot please God." (Rom. viii. 8.) And, "*without faith* it is impossible to please Him." (Heb. xi. 6.) Cain, the firstborn of Adam, "brought of the fruit of

the ground an offering unto the Lord, but the Lord had not respect unto him, nor to his offering." (Genesis iv.) And why? Because it *was* the fruit of the *ground*. Probably it was the best which the earth could produce, still it was the fruit of the earth, which had been cursed for man's sin, and consequently could not be accepted by God as a suitable presentation by a sinner to Him who is "of purer eyes than to behold evil."

So, they who bring their own good deeds,
Or life devoid of blame,
Will find their works accounted weeds,
And all their glory shame.
The *best* the human heart can yield,
Is still the fruit of *nature's* field.

Abel, on the other hand, "brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering." He came before God as a *sinner*, bringing with him a *victim*, in token of the necessity of the shedding of blood for the remission of his sins. "By faith he offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts." (Heb. xi. 4.)

The sacrifice which Abel brought,
A lamb, its life and blood,
On which he had no labour wrought,
Was well received of God;
So, they who trust in Christ alone
The Lamb who once was slain,
And nature's purest works disown,
A welcome will obtain;
For God, who knows a sinner's needs,
Accepts the Lamb in lieu of deeds.

If it were possible, which it is not, for a man to keep the whole law, except in one point, that one offence would be fatal to him. (James ii. 10.) But not only is man a sinner in practice, but what is worse, he is one by nature; and as a consequence, cannot bring forth good fruit; for "a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit." (Matt. vii. 17.) Hence the necessity of the work of Christ, who "once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." (1 Peter iii. 18.) "He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. (Heb. ix. 26.) He shed His precious blood "for the remission of sins." He who knew no sin, was made sin for us; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Cor. v. 21.) Having "died unto sin once," and "offered one sacrifice for sins," and thus put away that which otherwise would have been an impassable barrier to a sinner's entrance into the presence of God, He "was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father," and has "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;" the proof to the believing soul that his sins have been put away: for He "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." (Rom. iv. 25.)

The question for every soul then is, "What think ye of Christ?" Have you God's thoughts of Him? Are you taught of God to say, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God"? Have you brought the offering of faith, and found acceptance in God's beloved Son? For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved, but the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom men

crucified, but whom God raised from the dead. (Acts iv. 10-12.) The offering of works by man in unbelief cannot find acceptance with God, for how can the Living God own dead works? which are all that a man "dead in trespasses and sins" can produce. No; the acceptance of a sinner is in and through Christ; and as God will not give His glory to another, neither will He *share* it with him; the glory of our salvation must be *all* His own. The offerings of Cain and Abel cannot be blended. Salvation must be by Christ *alone*. Not by Christ *and* works, but simply and solely by Christ Himself, without any addition whatever to His one full and finished work upon the cross; owned and recognized by God, who raised Him from the dead, and gave Him glory at His own right hand.

Have you then, come to God? If you have, happy are ye; for nothing shall be able to separate you from "the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." If you have not come to Him, oh, delay not! but while God's one and only way of salvation is proclaimed, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus find acceptance with God, and blessing in Him for ever and ever. Amen.

DAVID AND ABIGAIL.

1 SAMUEL XXXV.

SAMUEL had died, and David was now the hope of the faithful in Israel. Born at Bethlehem, the youngest of his family, the eighth child, ruddy, of a beautiful countenance and goodly to look at, the king of God's providing, the keeper of the sheep, and anointed of the

Lord, he had waited, as it were, at the backside of the desert, where, by the way, he slew the lion and the bear (1 Sam xvii. 34, 35), until the time came for his manifestation to Israel.

The opportunity came: the hosts of the Philistines were ranged on one side of the valley of Elah under Goliath, the hosts of Israel on the other under Saul. Death apparently stared Israel in the face under the threatenings of the giant (xvii.); "they were dismayed and greatly afraid," when David comes forth, goes in advance of the hosts of Israel into the valley, and then and there slays Goliath with his own sword—with his own weapon he destroys "him that had the power of death."

But his very victory makes those who should be his friends his enemies. From that moment Saul becomes his foe, and seeks his life; he leaves the court, becomes a wanderer, the anointed one still, but "hunted like a partridge on the mountains." He is not, however, alone; for gathered to him (xxii.) are four hundred of the discontented, distressed, and insolvent, who gladly chose "the cave Adullam" in preference to the world's court with all its accompaniments of ceremonial, pomp, and vanity. David, Gad, and Abiathar, as prophet, priest, and king, have greater charms for them than those who in a carnal way occupied their place in Israel. And now in this chapter (xxv.) we find the anointed one of God, the heir to the throne, from the scene of his rejection, sending forth a message to a man called "Nabal," who was living in prosperity,—"Get you up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and greet him in my name, and say, Peace be both to thee, and peace

be to thine house, and peace be unto all that thou hast. . . . We come in a good day: give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh to thine hand."

Nabal's answer is short and surly. The hope of Israel has no claims on him, satiated as he is with this world's luxuries and plenty. A runaway slave is all that he can see in the anointed heir to the throne.

The message of *peace* is followed by the message of *judgment*. "Gird ye every man his sword upon his thigh. . . . So and more also do God unto the enemies of David, if I leave by the morning light one of all that pertain to Him." "*But Abigail made haste.*"

She had heard of her husband's churlish railing, she recognized and was thankful for all the protection afforded to her shepherds; she saw in David something more than a servant broken away from his master; she perceived that judgment was near, and therefore, without conferring with flesh and blood (v. 19), she falls at the feet of David, and owns how she believes that the Lord will certainly make him a sure house, and how that although "a man" (she has no other name for Saul) has risen to pursue and seek him, yet his soul should be found in the bundle of life with the Lord his God, and those of his enemies should he sling out as out of the middle of a sling; and that, since this is so, will he when appointed ruler over his Israel then remember his handmaid?

David's answer is beautiful: "Blessed be *the Lord God of Israel* which sent thee this day to meet me, and blessed be *thy advice*, and blessed be thou. . . . Go up in peace to thy house: see I have hearkened to thy voice, and have accepted thy person." Nabal dies

under the judgment of God. Abigail becomes the wife of the rejected king.

Surely, dear reader, we may learn a lesson from this. Christ has been born at Bethlehem, the king of God's providing, "the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely," the good, the chief, the great Shepherd; not, humanly speaking, the firstborn, but yet "the firstborn of every creature;" anointed of God in the midst of his brethren. He has bound the strong man that would have spoiled his father's sheep; He has gone down into the valley of death, and destroyed him that through death had the power of death, that is the devil. (Heb. ii. 14.) He has risen from the dead; "His life has been taken from the earth," and now from the glory, rejected of man, but chosen of God and precious, He has gathered around Him a little band of living stones, once discontented but now satisfied in Him; once distressed but now at rest at His feet; once in debt but now rich through Him; and just as the names of David's mighty men were not forgotten when the kingdom came (2 Sam. xxiii.), neither will these be without honourable mention at the judgment seat of Christ (1 Cor. iv. 5); and these He now sends forth as His heralds of peace to the world at large, and who can say there is no message for him?

Dear reader, there is a message of peace for *you* even as your eye rests on this paper. As God puts it by the mouth of His servant Peter, "He anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good ('preaching peace,' v. 36), and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, . . whom they slew and hanged on a tree; Him God raised up,

and shewed Him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead. And He commanded us to preach and to testify that it is He which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." (Acts x. 38-43.)

Dear reader, this is now the message of peace to you,—a present instantaneous pardon of your sins through believing on the One whom man slew, but whom God raised up. Mark the stress Peter lays upon the resurrection, how livingly he brings it before us: who did *eat and drink* with Him (Luke xxiv. 42, 43; John xxi. 13) after He rose from the dead; and why so? because, as the Holy Ghost says in 1 Cor. xv. 17, "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." Surely, then, any believer may say, "Since Christ is raised, of which I have abundant testimony (v. 5-8), my faith is not in vain; I am not in my sins." No, dear reader, if you believe on the Lord Jesus, you may know that your sins were laid on Him (1 Peter ii. 24), were buried in His grave. The thought of your sins need now no more trouble you; for God has said, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. x. 17.) God will not remember them, why then recall them? "Where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin" (v. 18); for "by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." (v. 14.)

But more than this. Should you receive this full testimony of the grace of our God, *the gift of the*

Holy Ghost is yours; for “while Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.” (Acts x. 44.) God sets His seal on His own perfected work, and links us by an indissoluble bond to His Son in heaven—the Head of His body, the Church. Abigail obtained present acceptance, and the hand and heart of the king, and, when the kingdom was set up (2 Sam. ii. 2), a place on the throne.

You, dear reader, on believing, receive remission of your sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost, “the earnest of your inheritance until the day of redemption.” (Eph. i. 14.) You are nourished and cherished now by the One of whose body, flesh, and bones, you have been made a member; and when all things are put under His feet, when God has “gathered together in one all things in Him, both which are in heaven and which are in earth” (Eph. i. 10), then you shall enjoy your inheritance, predestinated to you according to God’s purpose, to the praise of whose glory you shall be manifested. (vv. 11, 12.)

Surely, then, it becomes you to obey the gospel, to listen to His invitation. Let not husband, wife, or children hinder; but at once identify yourself heart and soul with the Christ whom man has rejected, but whom God has glorified. Make *Him* your end, your aim, your everything.

The world will meet the fate of Nabal. Drunken, it will yet meet the judgment of God. While they are actually saying, “Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape.” (1 Thess. v. 8.)

Of the two malefactors, one, like Abigail, asked for a place in the kingdom, and, like her, obtained a portion, not in proportion to her faith, but to the heart of the One who gave it; the other, like Nabal, railed on the Lord's anointed, and went from this world to pass eternity in the awful flames of the lake of fire.

Beware, dear reader, lest the solemn words of Proverbs i. 24 meet you on your dying bed: "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: they would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them." (Prov. i. 24-32.) "He that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark xvi. 16.)

PLEASURE.

"In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."—PSALM xvi. 11.

ONCE I look'd for pleasure
From this empty scene;
Counted all for treasure,
Which was golden sheen;

Floated down the current
On light folly's wave ;
Plung'd in passion's torrent
Freely, yet a slave.

Then I woo'd ambition,
Fain its heights would climb ;
Sought some noble mission,
Soar'd to themes sublime :
Till, my dreams forsaking,
I, to life's plain prose,
And its tasks betaking,
Bow'd to its repose.

Ah, the world can never
Happiness impart !
None but Christ can ever
Fill the craving heart :
Water, fresh and living,
From His bosom flows,
Peace and pleasure giving,
While it life bestows.

Ye who thirst for pleasure
Why from Jesus rove ?
Come, and prove the measure
Of His perfect love.
'Tis an ever-flowing,
Over-running well ;
Fullest bliss bestowing,
Joy which none can tell.

Drinking of the river
Of this sacred joy,
Thanks to Thee, the Giver,
Must the heart employ.
Saviour, life eternal,
Holy, blessed Lord,
Sum of bliss supernal,
Be Thy name adored !

“THE VOICE OF MY BELOVED.”

We have all felt the power of a voice known and loved. How, even in sleep, it touches the heart, and wakes up the slumbering senses. Its varying tones play upon our affections and our feelings like some skilled musician upon an instrument, which responds to the master's touch. A crowd may throng around us, many voices mingling their discordant tones; but there is one note, unheard by the multitude, which arrests us on our way, and we turn to look for the one we love.

It is thus when Jesus speaks. Above and beyond the din of this world, “My sheep hear my voice!” Of the men who journeyed with Saul it is said, “They heard *a voice*;” but Paul declares, “They heard not **THE** voice of *Him* that spake to *me*.” Ah, beloved, we need not only eyes that we may see, but ears that we may hear, or we miss the present enjoyment of that love which follows us every day and all the day long as we travel on to His presence. This was the solitary joy of the Son of the Father as He walked here among men. The Pharisees derided; the Sadducees tempted; the Herodians mocked; and His own disciples murmured and disputed in His very presence. But His wakened ear, above all other voices, heard One that solaced and gladdened His heart. He could testify again and again, under circumstances most discouraging, “the Father loveth the Son.” “Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have glorified it, and will glorify it

again." The people said it thundered; but to the wakened ear it was the voice of Him in whose bosom He ever had rest and changeless fellowship. Again, "As I hear I judge. Whatsoever I speak, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." "As my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And He that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please Him." (John viii. 28, 29.) And having finished His course, He said, "Now come I to thee;" "Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit."

But has He not still the wakened ear? Away from the glory, He once listened for the voice of Him who sent Him. Now, at home with the Father, having entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us, He listens for our voice. For your voice, beloved, and for mine. There are many voices uttering upon earth words of foolishness, of sin, of blasphemy, yea, many notes of melody, to charm the natural ear; but none of these arrest the ear of Him who is risen from the dead. Around the throne is ever the ascription of praise to Him who sits on the throne: "Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty!" But nearer and dearer to His heart is the cry of His own left here in the world: "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." "He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out; for they know His voice." If our hearts beat at the sound of His voice, He listens also for ours. "Let me hear thy voice," is His gracious word; "for sweet is thy voice." Fellowship must be at the least between two: there must be interchange.

If He speaks to us, surely we have much to say to Him. Never man spake like *this* man. It is not the wind, the earthquake, nor the fire, but the still small voice alone on the mount before God which causes us to pour out our hearts before Him. Are not our ears dull of hearing, that we hear so little of the secrets of His love, learn so little of His mind, know so little where He would have us to go, and what He would have us to do? Oh for the bored ear of the willing servant! (Ps. xl. 6; Ex. xxi. 6.)

Too often has He to stand at the door and knock. His *voice* is not enough: He must *knock* to arrest attention, to let us know He is there. (Blessed faithful One! “If we believe not, He abideth faithful.”) And even then it is added, “If any man hear my voice, and open the door.” Alas! that there should ever be a closed door between us and our beloved; some barrier that hinders the fellowship of hearts, the intimacy of love; yet, “if any man open the door, I will come in to him.” It is individual. The children of God may be indifferent, occupied with other things, but the wakened ear will hear His voice. “I will come in to **HIM**, and sup with him, and he with Me.” Blessed fellowship even now! Truly He has taken us home to His affections. He sits down by our side, and we by His. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? “Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out;” or rather, give up or surrender. “In no wise!” The thought could not enter His mind. He will keep us to the end, until, with an assembling shout, He comes to gather us up to Himself.

The last words of a friend leave their own peculiar

impress upon the soul; and in summing up the "many things" He had to say unto us, *His* last word was, "Surely I come quickly!" He reckons upon our love. Such is the earnestness of His own heart, that He expects an echo from ours. Oh, may we be so occupied with Himself, that the natural answer of our souls may ever be, "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"

"Thy companions hearken to thy voice; cause me to hear it. Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of spices."

Jesus! Thy love is mine,
In Thee I rest;
And, Lord, my love is Thine,
In Thee I rest;
Ne'er from Thee can I part,
I must dwell near Thy heart;
Life of my soul Thou art,
In Thee I rest.

Lord! mine exceeding joy,
In Thee I rest;
Nought can my life destroy,
In Thee I rest;
Saved by Thy precious blood,
Kept by my Shepherd's rod,
Through Thee made nigh to God,
In Thee I rest.

Soon shall the night be past,
In Thee I rest;
Thy face I'll see at last,
In Thee I'll rest;
Thy voice will call me home,
Ne'er from Thy side to roam.
Till that glad day shall come,
In Thee I'll rest.

PRIDE AND HUMILITY.

THE human heart, not submitting to God's word, accounts a man who says his sins are forgiven by the blood of Christ a presumptuous man and a self-righteous Pharisee; and calls him who covers himself with doubts, fears and distrust, an excellent model of humility. He calls unbelief humility, and faith pride.

Whether of these two would you call the proud or the humble soul, dear reader? There were two women both seeking riddance of the load of sin, both heard God's gospel, both heard the same truth from the same lips, that God laid on Jesus the iniquities of us all. One of them said, "Is it indeed true then, that God put my sins on Jesus when He hung on the cross?" and believing, her soul was overpowered at that priceless love which suffered in her stead, bled for her, was wounded, bruised, nailed, yea forsaken of God for her. The other, after hearing, was besought to believe, being told that God required nothing at her hand save faith. Her reply was "It is not true, I know better."

It is not every one who will boldly *say* of God's good news, "I know better;" but, alas, there are thousands who live and act as if they knew better than God. Tell them of the finished work of Jesus, tell them of His blood, of His resurrection, and bid them know that being justified by *faith* we have peace with God; they rush forthwith to their prayers, their strivings, their works. The Bible is as plain as the daylight; it only speaks of Christ; it says, believe, believe; but these souls practically reply, "It is not true, I know better."

Beloved reader, which way is it with you,—faith or works? peace or trouble? Christ or self?

Have you as a little child believed, have you drank the sincere milk of God's word and found it all Jesus? or, are you one of those who practically say, "I know better?"

THE CHURCH—THE BRIDE.

AN EXTRACT.

I WOULD here remark, that it is never stated in Scripture that Jesus shall reign *over* the Church. The Church is the bride—the Lamb's wife—His destined partner and companion in glory; and when He comes He will present her to Himself without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; then shall she share with Him His glory, and His crown. The Church is the body of Christ—bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh; it was of Christ and the Church the apostle spake, when he said, "they twain shall be one flesh," which he calls "a great mystery." (Eph. v. 32.) This mystery was set forth at "sundry times" in types and shadows from the beginning. As an instance of this we may bring forward Adam, who, we are told, was a "*figure of Him that was to come.*" (Rom. v. 14.) If we behold him as a lord of the creation, set over the works of God's hands, with all things put in subjection under his feet, do we not also see Eve at his right hand, bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, his partner and companion in all this glory? (Gen. i. 27, 28.) Now, here we have typically brought before us Christ, the last Adam—Lord of "the world to come"—"crowned with glory and honour," with all things put in sub-

jection under His feet,* and His bride, the Church, His *joint and fellow-heir* set upon the throne with Him (Rev. iii. 21), perfectly conformed to His image. (Phil. iii. 21.) And I would press the subject the more, as it is too much lost sight of by many of the Lord's people in the present day, who bring forward such passages as, "He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever," and tell us the house of Jacob means the Church. If this be true, the Church are the *subjects* of the kingdom, not "joint-heirs" with the King. Observe, it is not said, the house of Jacob shall reign *with* Him, as it is of the Church (2 Tim. ii. 12; Rev. xx. 6), but He shall reign *over* the house of Jacob, that is, over the *Jewish nation*, then restored and converted.

SERVICE.

It has occurred to me lately with comfort that though weak indeed is the moral effort we make in the service of Christ, yet service by a believer in this world is the sublimest moral sight in the creation; for angels serve with a consenting will, a consenting nature, and in a consenting system; we serve against all within and all around, the flesh and the world; and I cease to wonder that the church is called therefore into such dignity and such nearness to the throne in the kingdom. Yes; and let me ask, is there not a solemn warning to us in the history of Amaziah in 2 Chron. xxv. to watch the state of our affections towards the Lord, and not be satisfied by the mere performance of duties or services without a heart engaged for Him in the midst of them? For we read of Amaziah that he did what was right,

* Psalm viii. 6, compared with Heb. ii. 5-9.

but not with a perfect heart ; that is, as I suppose, not heartily as unto the Lord. He did what he did, perhaps, through fear of the law, or to keep good account with his own conscience ; but in his doings he had no care about the Lord, or His pleasure, or His glory, and was indifferent to the state of his affections towards Him. Terrible indeed, and more than we could have easily believed—he gets a victory over the children of Edom (in this and his previous acts, such as avenging the death of his father, and in dismissing the army of Israel, he had done right according to the letter of the commandment, the voice of the prophet), but his victory became the occasion of manifesting how hollow everything may be where there is not “a perfect heart,” no reference to God in our doings, no affection for Christ, and no concern about the coldness or barrenness of our poor hearts towards Him. But to return to Amaziah : he gets a victory, but his heart not being already possessed by the Lord, his victory gets possession of it, becomes the master of it, and seats itself there supreme. Accordingly he is lifted up, he boasts, and is proud, and the victory he got over Edom becomes the victor, is the master of his heart, because that heart was empty, not filled with the Lord. He therefore, as full of his victory, boasts, challenges the king of Israel, and suffers loss and dishonour in the battle ; but even more, the gods of the conquered Edom become the gods of his heart, he worships them, he adopts the spoils, the captives of his own hand in war, as the deities to whom he bows down. Monstrous folly ! Is this not written that we may learn to what a length of blindness and stupidity, as well as to what a length of

madness and self-destruction, the heart may be hurried that does not what it *does* in reference to the Lord? Whatever is done should be done heartily as unto the Lord.

SCRIPTURE QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

In Ephesians i. 1 we have "saints" and "faithful" in Christ Jesus. What is the difference? Does the latter refer to walk? In the eighth verse we have "wherein He hath abounded toward us in all *wisdom* and *prudence*." How are we to understand this? What is the meaning of "hath made both one" in Ephesians ii. 14?—R. H.

The word "saints" simply means "holy (or separated) ones." We are made holy by calling; hence we read; "To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, *called saints*." All the people of God in every dispensation are saints. We read of saints in Old Testament Scriptures, and we read also of the "camp of the beloved *saints*" at the close of the millennium, which refers to the Jews who will then occupy the place of earthly blessing. The "*faithful* in Christ Jesus" are true believers. In those days, to believe was to be faithful, and so it really is now, though not so manifest.

In the eighth verse it is most blessed to observe that God, who has abounded towards us so richly in Christ in grace and power, has also in *wisdom* and *prudence*. His *wisdom*, in so ministering to our necessities as to make us eternally happy, and to bring eternal glory to Himself. The work of a prudent person is to anticipate the difficulties of the future, and make provision accordingly. "A prudent man foreseeth the evil." This God has perfectly done as to ourselves. Hence the infinitely efficacious character of the one sacrifice which was offered, and the all-prevalent priesthood of Christ. In many other ways God has anticipated and fully met our need in and through Christ Jesus.

By "hath made both one," chapter ii. 14, we understand the oneness of the church in Christ, made up of believing Jews and Gentiles, each united to Christ by the Holy Ghost, and therefore united to one another in one body. "By one Spirit are we all baptized (both believing Jews and Gentiles) into one body." (1 Cor. xii. 13.)

“SAY NOW SHIBBOLETH.”

JUDGES xi. xii.

THE time of testing will surely come—the day approaches when mere profession will be found vain, and when the boast of infidel and scoffer will turn to hopeless sorrow. The Lord Jesus will not tarry for ever, He will not keep open the door of mercy always, but before long, surely He will draw His sword of judgment, and make war and with swift destruction destroy His adversaries. In the near presence of that day, we would earnestly enquire if you, dear reader, before the heart-searching God, bow as a redeemed sinner to the name of Jesus. He is rejected among men, His glories are disowned, His honour disbelieved, but every knee *shall* bow and every tongue *shall* confess Him Lord. Either in hell below, or in heaven above, His Lordship *shall* be owned by all men and by you.

Turn with us to the scene described in the chapters before us and learn a lesson of the last days.

The broken and discomfited army of the opposers of Jephthah, God's appointed judge, are retreating towards the Jordan. They had avowed to rid themselves of Jephthah, and he in return had given them opportunity to repent, but vain. In their self-confidence they came on against him, yet only to prove the strength of his arm and the keenness of his sword. Despising his forbearance they reaped his judgment. And now one by one, their pride hidden, their valour gone, they steal through oliveyard and vineyard down the mountain sides, hoping to reach the fords of Jordan and escape.

But as they approach the fords they see there before

them a band of Jephthah's men, and in their hands the sword of judgment. Suppliants when too late, pleaders for mercy when the day of mercy is passed, they cry one by one, “Let me go over.” But vain their desires, useless their longings. Of what avail to the thirsty sword the plea. On yonder shore are wives, daughters, babes! On yonder shore is home and peace and joy! The sword of judgment knows no refusal, righteousness alone can bid it be still.

“Let me go over,” says the fugitive, and Jephthah's men reply, “Art thou an Ephraimite?” Art thou an enemy of Jephthah? “If he said, Nay: then said they unto him, Say now Shibboleth; and he said Sibboleth: for he could not frame to pronounce it right. Then took they him, and slew him at the passages of Jordan.”

It was plain speaking and dealing, no excuses heard, no falsehood accepted. Judgment and its sword were there, the river of judgment (as Jordan signifies) was there: mercy was gone.

What! dear reader, will you come unexpectedly to death and judgment to plead in vain for an entrance to the bright and shining land beyond? Parents there, children there, fond friends there, happiness there, and there no pain, no sorrow, no death. “Let *me* go over.” But you plead to the sword in vain? What is your *title*? by what *right* do you say, “Let *me* go over”? Art thou an enemy of Jesus? A cold formalist, a lifeless professor, a self-righteous Pharisee, a boasting infidel, a jovial scoffer? “He that is not *with* me is *against* me,” said Jesus. What art thou?

No, no, you weep when too late, and profess in vain,

“I am not an enemy of Jesus.” Like the false Ephraimite men may answer nay; yet think you they shall escape judgment by deception.

Now mark this, there is a test, an infallible test, which all will be put to. We know a man by his life. “Thy speech bewrayeth thee.” “What think ye of Christ?” “Say now Shibboleth.” Let us now hear what you think of Christ? Is He your all for eternity and time? Your wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption? Is He your Saviour—your peace? This is the gospel Shibboleth, and if you can speak of Jesus the Lord as those who love Him speak, you are saved. You are not against Him, but with Him, and in that case righteousness is on your side, for you belong to Jesus; He bore your judgment, and you “shall not come into judgment.” If thou shalt believe in thine heart on the Lord Jesus, and shall confess with thy mouth that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved; for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

It was only a little lisping over one word that cost these Ephraimites their lives, but their inability to pronounce that one word proved they were Ephraimites. And when a man does not confess that Jesus is Lord, but goes about in the naughtiness of his own way, it is evident he is an enemy of God by wicked works. They should have crossed the “waterflood” could they have said Shibboleth; so, if you, dear reader, from your heart own Jesus, you have no waterfloods of woe to fear. He went into the “deep waters” for you, therefore the waterflood shall not overflow, neither the

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angelic legions,
earth its doom.
ess, like the light'ning,
ne on all below ;
presence height'ning
guish, fear, and woe.
mockers now are saying,
lips by scorning curl'd,
ay, which God is staying,
I ne'er o'er take the world ;
wiftly, surely coming,
soon it will be here ;
tentous signs are looming,
hat men may heed and fear.

Still God, with much long-suffering
Prolongs the day of grace;
His great salvation off'ring,
For faith's assur'd embrace.
Oh! heed His invitation,
Believe on Jesus' name;
Then thine is full salvation
From sin, its woe and shame.

“SAVED FOR NOTHING.”

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN A SERVANT OF CHRIST AND A LADY.

Minister. You say, Mrs. A—, that you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?

Mrs. A—. Yes, Sir; I believe every word that is said about Him in the Old and New Testaments.

Min. But I rather think you do not believe all that is there said about Christ.

Mrs. A. And why do you think so, sir? Why have you such a suspicion?

Min. Because, if you truly believe in Jesus Christ, and in “every word that is said about Him in the scriptures,” the result would be salvation, pardon, and “peace with God;” but it is quite the contrary of this with you. You are awfully afraid of God! an evidence that you are not looking at “God in the face of Jesus Christ.” You are mourning, repenting, and bitterly lamenting sin, and earnestly crying for mercy, and yet, you say, you “have no evidence of being heard, that your prayers, like stones thrown into the air, only fall back upon you with terror.” Are you not trying to make yourself good, and fit to meet God by your own repentance, instead of *throwing yourself, just as you are, upon Christ?* And this is the reason why con-

science upbraids you; for, indeed, you are only increasing your guilt instead of taking it away. You are not truly believing and trusting in Jesus.

Mrs. A. Oh, sir, I tell you again, that I firmly believe in Christ the Son of God, and that no poor sinner can be saved without Him, and I am striving and praying daily and hourly that He may save me.

Min. Well, Mrs. A——, you are praying and striving daily and hourly that He may save you; but are you willing to be saved without your praying and striving? Are you willing to be saved on His own terms, simply by faith in His [atoning] blood? You must know that it is "By grace through faith you are saved." You must "**BELIEVE, AND BE SAVED,**" and THEN pray and strive because you *are* saved.

Mrs. A. But, oh, how can such a wicked wretch as I am be saved without fervent prayer, and striving to repent before God?

Min. Your fervent prayers and repentance will never be accepted *until you first accept Christ*, as He is freely offered to you, *as an all-sufficient Saviour*. Now, Mrs. A——, I want you to think most seriously on what you have just said. You said you believed truly in Jesus Christ, and in every word that is said about Him in the Old and New Testaments. Then you must believe that Christ *can "save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him," even "the chief of sinners,"* and that "*faith in His blood,*" saves the soul.

Mrs. A. Yes, I do.

Min. And you believe in [the value and efficacy of] this Saviour's blood [in putting away sin]?

Mrs. A. Certainly, I do.

Min. Then you believe it can save you?

Here was a pause; at last the answer came slowly.

Mrs. A. Yes, I do.

Min. Then your faith *has saved* you; has it not?

Another long pause. Finally she put the inquiry:

Mrs. A. And is that salvation in a Saviour's blood?

Min. Certainly it is, if *you truly believe*, as you say.

And here came another most solemn pause. At last, lifting her eyes and hands towards heaven, her bosom heaving with deep emotion, and her eyes filled with tears, she exclaimed:

Mrs. A. Oh! now I see it! Now I see it! Blessed be God, now I see that I can be **SAVED FOR NOTHING!** I believed, but never before did I so see the completeness of that satisfaction which Christ has made for my sin; that I have nothing to do for my salvation but believe! Oh! sir, let me say to you, that this moment a burden has rolled from my soul. Blessed Jesus! and is this salvation in thy blood? How blind I have been these many years, to imagine that, in order to be saved, I should have to pray so fervently, repent so bitterly, and keep myself so pure from sin. Now I see that simple faith in that atoning blood can save any sinner, and save fully and freely; that it can save me! Oh! that I am saved—**SAVED FOR NOTHING!** Glory! glory to God for this!—*An Extract.*

SHAKEN, BUT NOT UPROOTED.

"A reed shaken with the wind."—MATT. xi. 7.

"A bruised reed."—MATT. xii. 20, 21.

UNFLINCHING boldness and faithfulness had characterized John in his ministry in the wilderness, but

circumstances had changed with him. It is not always easy to wait, and wait in prison ; to bear a reverse whether of prosperity or adversity. Circumstances try a man; they are the wind, which, if he be a reed will shake him. John had shewn nothing of this reed-like character in his active service : the multitude would have looked in vain for it then ; but the wavering manifested in his question is remarkable : "Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" Still, if the reed wavered, if it were *shaken* by the wind, it was *not uprooted*. The mind still dwelt upon the object of God's counsels, He that should come. The faith was weak, the spiritual eye was dim for the moment ; it may be, that Messiah, the hope of Israel, engrossed his thought. Was Jesus He ? John had truly said, "I must decrease." (John iii. 30.) What is man ? What saint, what servant, has not manifested weakness more or less ? "He put no trust in His servants," says Eliphaz, speaking of God to Job, and who is there upon earth would say such trust would be deserved ? Yet no servant likes to be set aside. The Master disregards not the one who *has* been faithful. He does not overlook the weakness ; He will not pass it by altogether ; but He answers it in His own inimitable way. "Go and shew John," &c. What was the character of the work which Jesus did ? They were works of "*benefit to man*." Man was considered in them. His needs were. Whatever the special need, the ministry of Jesus was applied to it. John came in the way of righteousness, *Jesus* in the way of *grace*. Grace looks not at the *merit*, but at the *need* of its object, and now John himself needs the testimony of

this wondrous grace. The bruised reed shall not be broken *in the Master's hand*, the smoking flax shall not be quenched. Faith, however low, shall be revived again; love, however feeble, shall be kindled afresh into a flame. The Son of God, whose eyes are as a flame of fire, discerns each one, discerns all things. Perfection is in all His ways. He will plead the cause of His servant, when that servant's state and circumstances are at the lowest. He will reprove him too, if needful, yet in the gentlest grace. Have you ever noticed the expression, "the *meekness* and *gentleness* of Christ"? How sweetly it comes out here! "Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me." Jesus knows all the difficulties of service, all the difficulties in the way of His servants, all the trials too of those who are laid aside from what is generally considered service. All is known to Him. But He was rejected in His turn. Like all who have been faithful in their day and generation, He, as a prophet, is rejected. Blessed Master! But His rejection only brings out His perfection, brings out the more fully *who He is* as well as *what He is*. He thanks the Father, owns Him Lord of heaven and earth; owns His sovereignty over all things; over all the spiritual world—the world of light and intelligence—the world of the spirits of men upon earth. They may reject the testimony of the lowly Jesus, but the Son has all things delivered into His hand. The Father has done this. (See also John iii. 35, and compare 1 Cor. viii. 6.) Only the Father knows the Son—the Son only knows the Father—He and those to whom He reveals Him of His own sovereign will. Sovereignty is something very terrible

to those who don't know grace, awful indeed, we may say, reverential awe becomes those who are in the presence of it. The Son of God has stooped, aye, even unto Calvary, to make the Father known. He made Him known indeed, in life, in His majestic, tender, holy ways (John xiv. 9); but in death He made a way for the outflowings of the infinite love that passeth knowledge, that ever was *in God*, for God is love; but never till then showed itself in all its fulness, breaking down as with a mighty tide all barriers that opposed it: providing for all man's spiritual wants in that most rich and precious blood there spilt upon the tree, showing to what vast extent that love could go to save a ruined, guilty race, a race of sinners. Oh, how touching to hear the Son of God, the heir of all things in the consciousness of power, addressing man, addressing sinners with the words, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Blessed Jesus! there is none elsewhere, we know it, none in creation, none in law, none anywhere, save in Himself—the Lord, the Son, the Saviour. There is rest in Him, in His atoning blood, His spotless perfection, His righteousness, now for the sinner that believes, for Christ is made unto us righteousness, Christ *is* the righteousness. Once more hear Him saying, "Come unto me." Burdens fall away when He is reached, labour and hopeless toil beneath the law of Moses cease. Jesus gives rest. The Son of God gives liberty. Bruised reeds arise unbroken, for the Lamb of God was slain. It pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief, therefore He can say, risen and exalted as He is upon the throne of

God in heaven, "Come unto me." He has title to say it—redemption title—title earned as the suffering man, "Come unto me." The glories of His person are untouched by all that He suffered in humiliation. Glorify His name then, bow the willing knee to Jesus, grace will bow the *heart* to Him and fill the soul with peace, while He alone becomes the object, the centre of worship and of rest.

BE FAITHFUL.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."—*1 Cor. xv. 58.*

THIS soul-stirring appeal of the apostle is founded upon the most glorious hopes and prospects that could be set before the heart and mind of man. He had been telling them what *must* be; he had been showing them a mystery of God; and the mysteries of God are things not depending in any sort upon man or his ways for their accomplishment, but eternal purposes—things foreknown and designed of God Himself to be by Him accomplished, for His own glory, and the blessing of His creation. The judgment too, doubtless, of that which shall be found finally in arms against Him. But this latter is not the subject here; the saints are the subject. We shall not all sleep, he says. Many *do* sleep; they have fallen asleep in Jesus. All the way down from the apostle's time till now it has been so. But some remain. Thank God, amid the terrible state of ruin and confusion into which things have fallen, there are some on earth still who are *His*. *Who* they are and *where* they are; *He knows*. They are heavenly;

they belong to the new creation ; they have bodies of humiliation, mortal, corruptible, still about them, but they shall be changed. "We," says the apostle, "shall be changed." It is wonderful how faith links itself with every family of God, whether in earth or heaven. Faith in the apostle linked him with all the saints, those who live in our day as well as in his own; and faith in us links all together; yea, goes back to the very earliest day in which a saint was, and sees him in the resurrection by the power of God. It is a vast and wonderful subject, but it is blessedly brought out here in the fifteenth of 1st Corinthians. The very self-same individuals as have borne this image of the earthly *shall* also bear the image of the heavenly. I speak of saints now, of course ; and such a marvellous change as is here indicated could only be absolutely and entirely the work of God. This makes it so sure ; and this to me invests the whole subject of redemption, from first to last, with such a wondrous glory. Who conceived it? God. Who wrought it as far as it has been wrought? God surely. The incarnate Word was here more than eighteen hundred years ago to accomplish in suffering the work assigned Him to do. He did it; He shed His precious blood upon the cross as the ransom price for His people; He has won the victory for them over sin, and death, and hell. Justice is satisfied for all their guilt, and He lives in heaven to carry on their cause as Advocate on high. But this is not all. He is the resurrection ; He is the life. Eternal life was in Him always, manifested when He was on earth to them whose eyes were opened to behold Him, known in heaven to faith now, the Holy Ghost having

quickened souls to know and to believe on (or in) Him.

These wait the resurrection of the body, the resurrection of the just, the justified by faith from the beginning; for as salvation is of *grace*, so by faith; grace working faith in each, faith in the word of God, the testimony of God, whatever that might have been in any age, always, we know, to *Jesus*; for in Him the substance of all blessing was, and ever will be. These wait, I say, His coming. Christ is the one hope for all, in heaven and in earth. The earth waits for the day of His glory, the day of His espousals, and of the gladness of His heart; the day to which the saints already belong; ("Ye are all the children of the light, and of the day;") that day which cannot dawn upon the world until the mighty transformation shall be accomplished of which this chapter treats, this mystery yet to have its action to the glory of the power of God; for victory then will be opened and displayed as it has never been before. True, when the firstfruits, in the person of the Christ, rose up and left the tomb, the victory was secured for all—all that are Christ's. The Head arose in glorious triumph—went to glory—blessed be His name! and faith, beholding Him, can say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" But then it will be *displayed*. Thanks be to God, which *giveth* us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, we *now* may sing. And many *have* sung it, as they passed away from earth to heaven; but they *will* sing it again, in louder, happier song on that blest morning.

"Thrice blessed joy-inspiring hope,
It lifts the fainting spirit up."

May the saints now feel it so. Is it not joy, that *one* thought, that all depends on God—on God alone? Therefore it cannot fail, His Son *will* be glorified in His saints, and admired *in* all them that believe in that day.

Beloved brethren, is there not room then for the exhortation, “Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord”? What *is* that work? a solemn, serious question. Not surely, to act on principles of schism—to carry further the wretched work of scattering and dividing the living sheep of Christ—of multiplying tables and of building walls. No, beloved brethren, let the time past suffice for this. We cannot surely *mend* the past; we have to hang our heads in shame for what has happened to God’s church on earth, for all that our own folly has brought on us; but let no man’s heart fail him because of this event. God is faithful. Jesus will soon appear. The Holy Ghost abides with us. The word of God is as pure and true as ever. Let us then earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Let his truth be spoken—souls cared for and nourished, the sincere milk of the word be sought for and administered, the gospel preached to sinners, the salvation of those yet spared sought earnestly, prayers made for all, mutual strengthening of hands be sought, love cultivated, the poor cared for, each man waiting on his ministry, thus shall blessing flow, thus shall God be glorified, and thanks and praise shall arise to Him even from the wilderness, from hearts that Jesus’ love has stooped to bless.

REMARKS ON MATTHEW XXIV. XXV.

(CHAP. XXIV. 32-41.)

THE Lord having answered the disciples' questions, at least two of them, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the age?" now gives two illustrations, one of a fig tree, and the other of the facts that occurred at the end of the antediluvian age, in the days of Noah.

In the parable of the fig tree, the Lord reminds them of summer being not far off when leaves begin to shoot forth. This was a fact appreciable to the senses. It was a matter of *sight*: "when ye shall *see* these things, know that it is near, even at the doors." (*vv. 32, 33.*) These things would occur sufficiently plain, to assure them of the near coming of the Lord *to Israel*. They were therefore to watch the progress of events, and mark the signs of the times. This was what their questions involved as to "the sign" of His coming, and of "the end of the age," when Israel should say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. The people of Israel had been accustomed to look for signs, and they often had them. It was their mistake when Jesus came, and still is, for we are told that "the Jews require a sign." "We," on the contrary, "walk by faith, not by sight," and know it to be our fitting posture to "wait for God's Son from heaven," as those who are in Him, and already seated in Him in heavenly places. The remnant of Israel who come upon the scene after we are gone will doubtless understand, when they *see* these events occurring, that their redemption draweth nigh.

The Lord also assures them that this generation—the race of Jews—will still be in existence, will not pass away, till all these things be fulfilled. And it is remarkable, while some tribes of the earth have passed away, and become wholly untraceable, yet the Jews remain a manifestly distinct race unto this day. That the Lord in thus speaking did not mean that the identical people then living on the earth would be in existence until the fulfilment of this prophecy is very clear, for proof of which we need only call attention to the 12th chapter. There when speaking of the unclean spirit, and showing Israel's future, when the spirit of idolatry would return, and take to itself seven other spirits more wicked than itself—referring to the Antichrist—He adds, "*Even so shall it be unto this wicked generation.*" This shows that our Lord applies the phrase "this generation" to those who do not come upon the scene for at least 1800 years after. It leaves no doubt that our Lord did not speak of "this generation" as actually referring to persons then alive, but to the Jews as a race, who, notwithstanding all the chastisements and scattering in unbelief, should still, in God's wondrous mercy, be preserved as a distinct people, until all these predictions should have their accomplishment. The word of the Lord, however, is infallible; the strongest and most lasting thing in God's created universe will change, but God's truth remains the same. Our Lord insisted on this, and that too in connection with these prophecies: He said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (v. 35.)

The other illustration is the days of Noe; and our

Lord prefaces it by referring to the ignorance that all are left in as to the precise time when He will be revealed from heaven. While the intelligent might gather general instruction as events became fulfilled, the day and hour were not revealed, not even to angels, though they would accompany the Lord in this public manifestation. "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." (v. 36.) As to the world, the day will come upon it as a thief in the night; so sudden and unexpected will it be. They will be rather priding themselves on their attainments; "for when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape." It was like this in Noah's time. They heeded not the preacher's testimony. The building of the ark seemed only a strange incident in the world's history. They attended unmoved to their daily pursuits, necessary duties, and matters of present comfort, or they might have been simply matters of business. Still they were deaf to God's testimony. They hearkened not to His word. They perceived not God's ways. They were therefore in culpable ignorance. "They knew not," and they wished to be ignorant. Like many now, they did not care to know God's mind. They are willingly ignorant. Hence it must be that the day of the Lord will come upon them as a thief in the night. The Lord will be entirely unexpected by them. Hence the Lord likens His coming from heaven in power and great glory to judge the living and dead, to the judgment of the antediluvians. "As the days of Noe were, so shall also the

coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." (*vv. 37-39.*) They *knew* when it was too late. When the flood came, and Noe was safe in the ark, then they *knew*, but not before. *So* shall also the coming of the Son of man be! How very solemn is the parallel! Men attending to the necessaries, and comforts, and business of life, and yet so refusing God's testimony as to be ignorant of the fact that Jesus is soon coming from heaven to judge the world in righteousness. But so it is. We see exactly this condition of things, and indifferentism, with all its sad, yet, it may be, quiet accompaniments, becoming more and more mature. Not indifferentism to religious *things*, but carelessness as to God's testimony for the times—unconcerned, it may be, as to the fact that Christ is quickly about to arise from that throne on which He is now seated, and coming in flaming fire to execute judgment on the ungodly. Instead, then, of Christ finding the world converted, it is positively taught here by our Lord Himself, that He will find it in antediluvian ignorance and unbelief, the measure of iniquity full, and ripe for the outpouring of divine judgment.

The subject here, as I have endeavoured to show, not being the Lord coming *for* us, but *with* us, to execute judgment on the living, and to bless a people in the earth, as in Noah's days; the judgment of the flood is used by our Lord as a suitable and striking

illustration: “*as the days of Noah were, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be.*” There is therefore no allusion to the translation of Enoch, who was removed from the scene altogether *before* the judgment came. But our Lord having thus stamped the days of Noah as a type of His coming in flaming fire to judge, nothing can be plainer than that Enoch illustrates the translation of the heavenly saints to meet the Lord in the air, and that the silence about him is exactly in keeping with the instruction of the chapter. And what is still more striking, we get the separation that took place in Noah’s day specially referred to here, which we know will precisely correspond with what the Lord will do when He comes in the clouds of heaven with His saints. As in the flood it was the wicked *He took away*, and brought His elect through the judgment into *blessing on the earth*; so the Lord will take the wicked away—cut them off in judgment, and cause the blessed ones to go into the millennial earth. “Then shall two be in the field; the one shall *be taken*, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall *be taken* and the other left.” (vv. 40, 41.) It is the Lord introducing the promised time of blessing in the earth, taking *the bad away, casting out them which do iniquity*, and leaving a blessed people *in the earth*. When the Lord comes *for us*, the action is precisely opposite. Like Enoch, the blessed ones will be taken away—translated—caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and the wicked left behind for judgment. Ours is indeed a blessed hope.

LIFE OR JUDGMENT.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS.

JOHN v. 23-29.

THE subjects here are Life and Judgment. Jesus the Son of God is Life-giver, and will be both the Raiser of the dead and the Judge. "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." "All judgment" clearly shows that He will be judge of the living as well as the dead.

Before the time of judgment arrives the Judge tells us who will be judged, and who will not be judged. Nothing can be more at variance with the teaching of Scripture than the popular doctrine that there will be one general resurrection both of believers and unbelievers, and that all are yet to be judged as to salvation. Such teaching is very pernicious. If a believer receives it, it always makes him uncertain as to his security. It deceives the unbeliever, not only by keeping him from the true character of the gospel as presenting a present salvation, and his responsibility to God on hearing it, but makes him imagine that there is some distant hope for him, if salvation cannot be positively decided before this so-called general judgment. It is a doctrine which the Lord's faithful ones should earnestly protest against. In this way many of God's children may be delivered from doubt and perplexity, and be led to rejoice in their present security, and in the blessed hope of soon being caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

In the 24th verse of this chapter we have what we may call the verdict of Him who, as the Judge, will

soon execute divine judgment. Observe what He says. He begins with a double assurance of the truth and importance of what follows: "*Verily, verily, I say unto you.*" Then He speaks of *hearing, believing, and having*, and declares that the person who hears and believes has the present possession of everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation or judgment. He is to *hear*, not to *do* something, or *say* something, or *feel* something, but to *hear*. He is to hear *Christ's word*, not man's *doctrines*, man's *creeds*, man's *opinions*, but Christ's word. "*He that heareth my word.*" How simple this is! But it may be asked, what did Christ say? What word is it that I am to hear? Did He not say, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life"? Did He not say, "This is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day"? Did He not say, "Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"? These are some of Christ's words. Do you hear them? Do you receive them as Christ's own words? He came from heaven and made God known; He declared the Father. God has spoken to us by His Son. Do you then hear *Christ's word?* This is the first point. And, having heard Christ's word, do you *believe* the Father sent Him? Do you give God the glory of having thus sent His only-begotten Son—that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world? This is divine mercy. This tells us the love of God to sinners. It originates in God Himself. He sends the Saviour. The Saviour

reveals the Father; and Jesus said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." There cannot be peace if God is not known as the One who sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. God's infinite love in giving His only-begotten Son to save *you* as a sinner, when dead in sins, is the alone source of true peace. Receiving His testimony you can approach God with confidence; His word warrants it, and assures you that you have everlasting life. *Hearing* Christ's word, and *believing* on Him that sent Him, you *have* everlasting life; not, observe, when you die, or after death, but *now*—"hath everlasting life." And, more than this, you will not come into judgment; many will, but you cannot, because Christ has been judged for you in the death of the cross, and has given you eternal life. How can a person who already has everlasting life come into judgment? He who is Judge of all says you shall not. Can there be better authority? Can any thing be more full of consolation? Could there possibly be a more stable ground of peace? Could any thing give more perfect rest to the soul? You *have heard* Christ's word, you *have believed* that God in rich mercy sent His Son to die for sinners, you *have* then everlasting life, and *will not* come into condemnation or judgment. There can be no room for doubt, because you *have* Christ's word for it, and the Scripture cannot be broken. He said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." What a firm foundation! What blessed security! what perfect peace! Could anything warrant more thorough confidence in God? The believer

shall not come into judgment. How can he if Christ has been judged for him? If Christ was made sin for him, was put to death for him, bare the wrath of God for him, how can he be judged about his sins? Does not God now say, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more"? The whole question of judgment of sin then is passed for the believer. Christ has purged our sins, and so completely done the work that He has sat down on the right hand of God. It is therefore added, that we have "passed from death unto life." This is the positive side of the subject. The believer was dead in sin, but is now in life on the other side of death—has passed out of his position in Adam in death, into a standing in life in Christ, the last Adam. The believer then has everlasting life, his old Adam position has passed under the righteous judgment of God in the death of Christ his substitute; so that he is dead, and is now alive, standing in life in Christ at God's right hand. Hence the next verse goes on to speak of Christ as a present Life-giver, a quickener of *souls* dead in trespasses and sins by His word. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." This is still going on. The Son of God is speaking from heaven, through the ministry of divine grace, by His servants. Whatever be the instrumentality, it is Christ who quickens by His word and Spirit. Thank God, He is still the Giver of eternal life to *souls* dead in sins. This *hour* has already extended over nearly 2000 years.

But, as we have seen, He is to execute judgment. The next verses therefore show that His power is yet

to be exercised over the *bodies* of all who have actually died. The hour for that process may extend, too, over a long time. The 20th chapter of Revelation shows clearly that a thousand years will elapse between these two resurrections. But here we are told that "*all* who are in their graves," saints or sinners, saved or lost, "*shall hear His voice, and come forth.*" This is plain enough. Death must be destroyed by Jesus, the Prince of Life. Well, how do they come forth? Do they all rise at the same time? Is it one general resurrection? By no means; quite the reverse. "*They that have done good unto the resurrection of life.*" What is it to do good? In the next chapter we are told that when some said unto Jesus, "*What shall we do that we might work the works of God?*" Jesus answered, and said unto them, *This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent.*" This, observe, is a resurrection of those who have life, described in the 24th verse. No marvel then that we are told in the 20th of Revelation, "*Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection.*" Such will be for ever with Christ, and like Christ. But what of those who have died in their sins, who have not life, but have done evil, that is, have not believed on the only-begotten Son of God? We are told "*they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation*" (or judgment). This is another resurrection. These must be judged according to their works. The books will be opened, and a deliberate judgment of each case gone into. But what can the result of man's being judged by the light of divine holiness and truth be? Certainly it can be nothing less than eternal damnation. Hence we are

told that "he that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life, but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life (he will have no part in the resurrection of life), but the wrath of God abideth on him." Hence we read in the inspired account of this resurrection of judgment, that "whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

It must then, dear reader, be either the present possession of everlasting life, and going on to the resurrection of life; or doing evil, that is, doing your own will—not hearing the voice of the Son of God, not believing on Him that sent Him—and going on to the resurrection of judgment. To which of these two resurrections are you hastening? The path you are treading tells the tale as to the end.

THE GLORIOUS PROCLAMATION.

HARK! the glorious proclamation,
Sounding from the throne above!
Rich, eternal, free salvation,
Fruit of God's unbounded love.
'Tis to sinners, rebels, traitors,
God His banner has unfurl'd,
To opposers, foes, and haters,
To the lost throughout the world.

Who can tell the priceless treasure
God possess'd in Christ His Son?
Yet He gave, with love's full measure,
Him for us, His only One.
Sinless He, for sin He suffer'd,
All its awful judgment bore;
As the willing Victim, offer'd
Up Himself. Could love do more?

Great the work by Christ completed !
Sin for ever put away ;
Satan vanquished, death defeated ;
Opened wide the realms of day !
See the Victor, crown'd with glory,
Seated on the throne of God !
Shout aloud the joyful story
Of redemption through His blood.

Now that sin's gigantic mountain
Is engulf'd by loves great force,
Freely flows sweet mercy's fountain,
God Himself its blessed source.
Oh, how earnest, pure, and pressing
Is the love of God to man !
Who can sound its depth of blessing ?
Who its length and breadth can span ?

WE HAVE NOT SALVATION ONLY, BUT A SAVIOUR.

Luke vii. 11—50.

In this passage two scenes are brought before us. In the one we find the Lord enters the city of Nain (v. 11), and in the other He is a guest in the house of the Pharisee. The meaning of the word Nain is “beautiful.” It is a *beautiful* place to which the Lord comes; but what is then presented to Him? The saddest picture which earth could offer! He meets at the gate of the city a widow who has lost her only son. This was the filling up of sorrow,—greater you could not find. We can hardly estimate the desolation of a widow in those days. There was no provision made for them as now; and here was one, not only a widow, but one who had lost her only son, on whom her heart

naturally fastened, and who had grown up to be her stay. He was dead, and she was left utterly desolate. What a commentary on the beautiful things of this earth! Here was a beautiful place, but what misery of heart in it; and the Lord comes to it only to find there the greatest human sorrow!

Elisha had found the same terrible contrast at Jericho. (2 Kings ii. 19.) The "men of the city" say unto him, "Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant as my Lord seeth, *but the water is naught and the ground barren.*" There was a positive attraction in the place itself;—but then there was dearth and barrenness in it. The earth is like Jericho and Nain. That there is beauty in it I do not deny, but I say also there is *death in it*—"*the water is naught,*" &c.

In the wilderness (Luke iv.) the Lord learnt, as a man, that there was no subsidy in nature. To Adam in the garden of Eden *everything* was a subsidy; telling him of God's interest in and care for him,—but with the Lord it was all different. He was put to the proof. He was the dependent one. He, when hungered, could say, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. He could waive the righteous claims of nature in simple subjection to God. He endured because God was His resource, not in supplying His need, but satisfying His heart while suffering from it.

This Blessed One came to declare God's thoughts about man, and here we find Him in this place, called "beautiful," before a case of sorrow, humanly speaking, irreparable. What could you or I do in such a

scene? What was all the beauty of the place to the widow when her last link to earth was gone? What sorrowful heart is there that does not know the agony of a bright day? "As vinegar on nitre, so is he that singeth songs to a heavy heart."

But God had visited His people. Here was One who had come to destroy (not death only, but) HIM that had the power of death . . . and to deliver them, who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage,"—One who brought life and incorruptibility to light through the Gospel—who had vowed to render the judgment of death that He might *abolish it*—who had gone down into the grave to grapple with it in the very stronghold of its power. Well, it is He who comes to relieve the sorrow and desolation of this scene at Nain. His word is, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, . . . and He delivered him to his mother."

Let us look now at the other scene. The Lord's fame had gone abroad. "The rumour of Him went forth throughout all Judea." And in verse 36 we find Him a guest in a Pharisee's house. He is now revealed as the Saviour. In this day we hear a great deal about salvation, but I want more than salvation, and I have more, I have *a Saviour!* What is the difference? you may ask. Why *this*, even that I have the *Person* who wrought the salvation. Many a one who is not yet sure of the forgiveness of sins, is more devoted than some who say they are. One is theoretically right but practically wrong—the other is practically right but theoretically wrong. Not one of the Apostles, before the death of Christ, would speak with assurance of

the forgiveness of sins, and yet *how devoted* they were, and why? They had got the person. It is the Lord's person that is left out in the preaching of this day, while His work is proclaimed. If any sovereign of a country gave himself for me, would it not be far above any benefit he could confer? Well, in Christ I have got the blessed One Himself,—not salvation only but a Saviour. Simeon (Luke ii.) had the Saviour in his arms. Nothing really satisfies the heart but a knowledge of the person who has conferred the benefit. It is this that gives rest to the soul—security. I have love itself—the whole of His heart; and my necessity becomes the opportunity for the display of the love. Love is not exhausted by giving expression to itself, and *God's* love is not happy till it has removed every hindrance to the expression of itself and met my every need. Then only can it fully enjoy itself. The woman (Luke viii. 43) who touched His garment was made whole, but she had no sense of security till she knew the heart of the One who had healed her—till *He* made her to know “I have done it, and that with all my heart.” *Then* she got the knowledge not only of salvation, but of a Saviour.

Now it is just this which we get in this scene in the Pharisee's house. The report of the Lord had gone abroad, and this poor woman, when she knows where He is, comes to Him; for she says, I have got a Saviour. Then, mark! she *comes to Him*; she is drawn to Him; she was a sinner; she wanted a Saviour; she knew that He sat in the Pharisee's house, and she was awokened to the sense of what He was in Himself. How different was it with the Pharisee. He too had

heard the rumour of this wondrous One, who had brought in life when there was death, and he invited Him to his house, but mark the reception! Thus it is with the religious people of this day: they accord Him a certain reception, but there is no real link to Him. But this woman, who was a sinner, feels the magnitude and gravity of what He has wrought, and it is Himself—the Saviour—that is before her mind, though she knows nothing about the extent of the blessing. The Lord knows all about her history and state, and He says, “Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she *loved much*. Now this is just what characterizes a true reception of Christ. She has found out that He is the Saviour, and how does she come to Him? Prepared to make the most of Him. She can do nothing else; she is taken up with the person of the Lord, she is indifferent to the sneers of the Pharisees, and undeterred by her own wretched condition, she thinks only of making much of this Blessed One. She was very ignorant, and as yet knew nothing of the forgiveness of sins, but she was regardless of every one but Himself. He is her Saviour, and her heart is so captivated with Him, that the one purpose of it is to make much of Him, at the expense of herself and of everything else. Great love can make no account of self. To make much of its object is its one thought, and no effort. “She stood at His feet behind Him weeping, and began to wash His feet with tears, and to wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed His feet, and anointed them with the ointment.”

The Pharisee received Him into his house, but had no thought of all these attentions, and in his heart he

condemns her ; but no matter what might be said of herself, her purpose was fixed,—there was One before her to whom her heart was bound.

We find in 1 Sam. xvii. xviii. another example of this. David killed Goliath, and is brought before Saul with the head of Goliath in his hand ; and we read, “the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.” What has happened ? Goliath is killed. Jonathan has full sense of the deliverance. He, as the king’s son, was properly the person who should have rid the country from thraldom. Imagine Jonathan’s feelings, a moment before overwhelmed with the dread of Goliath. But now one had come who had overcome and destroyed the mighty one. The head of Goliath is in David’s hands, and “the soul of Jonathan is so knit with the soul of David, that before the eyes of all, he strips himself of the robe that was upon him and of his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle,—denudes himself of everything that distinguishes him,—and who for ? For David. He says, as it were, I put *all* the distinction on the one who is worthy of it, and all because of what David had accomplished for him. Every distinction that marked Jonathan as a man he puts on David ; he says, “I owe that man everything, and it is the positive delight of my heart to render everything.” Saul like the Pharisee accords him a certain reception, he is satisfied that the thing is done, Israel is delivered ; but he has no heart’s affection for the one who wrought the deliverance. If *you* had the sense of what that Blessed One has wrought, it would be an easy thing to you to

say, the best thing I have I would give to Him, because I delight in Him who has delivered me. I not only "love Him much," but I have got heart satisfaction in Him, and it is no effort to me to accord all distinction to the one who has all preeminence in my affection. By an unseen process this woman is led to Christ, she is absorbed with Him; like Jonathan to David, her soul is knit to Him, and the Lord takes it into account because He knew it was love; it is not a question of the amount done, it is the manner of the attention—the minuteness of it—and He marks the contrast between her and the Pharisee, and says, "Thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment."

You may know the forgiveness of your sins and yet your heart may not be bound to Him, and you may never have stepped out of your way for a moment to declare that He is the object of your heart. One so worthy in your eyes that the very thing that would distinguish you, is the very thing you would give to distinguish Him. Ah, if your soul has apprehended what Christ has wrought for you, your whole life will declare it. The order and depth of conversions are proved by the measure of the apprehension souls have of *Him*. The disciples evangelized Jesus. Where there is the *apprehension* of Him there must be the *expression* of Him. It must be so. It is *one* thing to be saved, to have salvation, and another for your soul

to be in immediate contact with your Saviour. He has been lifted up as the brazen serpent. Have you looked and lived? If you have looked at Him you can't help loving Him; and, like Jonathan, your heart requires of you that its love should find expression without an effort. We meet with conversions in the present day in which there is little evidence of affection to Him, no sense of *who* He is, or of His being personally an object to the heart. It is merely a question of happiness, or rather rest of conscience. People are asked, "Are you happy?" I ask, "Have you found *Christ*?" And if you have, the distinguishing mark of your possession is that you delight in Him. Neither do I believe it can be a happy conversion where *forgiveness* is everything. It is the one who is forgiven much that loves much; and where there is but little devotedness to Christ there is little sense of what He has done. How often we are allowed to get into doubt, trouble, sorrow, just to bring out to our souls the wonderful blessing of finding Christ our object; when we have found Him it is easy to give up everything for Him, nay, it is pain to keep anything back from Him. Simeon, with the Babe in his arms, says, everything for me is bound up in this child, I don't want anything more. Peter forsook all to follow Him,—was it sorrow to him? It would have been far more sorrow if the Lord had forbidden him to do so. The man that was delivered (Mark v. 18) besought Him that he might be with Him. Zacchæus wants to see *Him*, and so this poor woman goes straight to Him—He is her Saviour. Paul says, "He loved *me*—gave Himself for *me*." Can you say, "He has done it for *me*"? This it is that occupies you with

the Person—this is the mark of a true reception of Christ. If you have believed the testimony of His work, your heart ought to be occupied with the One who wrought it. If it is not, you will be brought through deep waters, that you may discover the terrible yawning gulf between your nature and the living God; and that Christ alone can deliver you from that nature.

A devoted heart is only one that has discovered the worth of Christ, and no one can be devoted until he has discovered it. It is not a question of time or attainment; the immediate and necessary consequence of this secret being divulged to your heart is to make it true to the One to whom it is so deeply indebted. Love makes much of its object, and counts it not self-sacrifice. Self drops off when my Saviour becomes the *one* object of my heart.

HE SUFFERED FOR US.

(AN EXTRACT.)

EIGHTY years ago a fierce war raged in India between the English and Tippoo Saib. On one occasion several English officers were taken prisoners, among them one named Baird. One day a native officer brought in fetters to be put upon each of the prisoners, the wounded one not excepted. Baird had been severely wounded, and was suffering from pain and weakness.

A grey haired officer said to the native official, "You do not think of putting chains upon that wounded man?" "There are just as many pairs of fetters as there are captives," was the answer, "and every pair

must be worn." "Then," said the noble officer, "*put two pairs on me*; I will bear his as well as my own." This was done. Strange to say, Baird lived to regain his freedom—lived to take that very city, but his noble friend died in prison. Up to his death he wore two pairs of fetters. But what if he had worn the fetters of all in the prison? what if, instead of being a captive himself, he had been free and great, and had quitted a glorious palace to live in their loathsome dungeon, to wear their chains, to bear their stripes, to suffer and die in their stead, that they might go free?

Friend, such a thing *has* been done. "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men—the man Christ Jesus," "*who gave Himself a ransom for all.*" "*Christ died* for our sins, according to the Scriptures." "*Our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity.*"

ARE YOU IN CHRIST?

My dear reader, what a mercy you are not in hell! God be thanked you are not in eternal misery. Do think of this. The sparing mercy of God alone has kept you from outer darkness; and if you are not in Christ, you never can come into God's blessed presence. You may be as religious as you like, as devoted as you desire in acts of kindness; you may say over your accustomed forms of prayer many times a day, still the one vital question is, Are you in Christ? If you have received Christ as your Saviour, you are in Christ. If you are in Christ, you are safe, you belong to the

Church of God, you are a joint-heir with Christ, and will share with Him the coming glory. But oh! if you still reject Christ; if you continue to refuse the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour, the time of terrible judgment will assuredly find you out. He will bring you to His feet. He will then so thoroughly convict you that you will not be able to answer Him a word. You will be speechless before Him. He must and will condemn you to outer darkness with the devil and His angels for ever.

Do consider, dear reader, what crimson, scarlet sins and guilt you carry about with you. Come, then, to the Lord Jesus, just as you are, that you may know Him and rejoice in Him as your Saviour; for "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" You may not neglect your honest duties; you may not neglect to say prayers; you may not neglect to go to church or chapel; you may not neglect to read the Bible; but, dear reader, do you not neglect salvation? do you not neglect Christ and refuse Him as *your* Saviour? What can be worse? Do you not know, therefore, that you are in the road to eternal perdition? Oh that you may *now* acknowledge the rich mercy of God in giving His only begotten Son to die for poor ruined sinners like you and me, that whosoever—observe, "*whosoever*,"—whether rich or poor, profligate or moral; "*whosoever*,"—grey-headed or youthful, learned or ignorant; "*whosoever*" you are or whatever be your history, condition, or character, if you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, He declares that you "*shall not perish, but have everlasting life!*"

Poor dear, dying sinner, these are the loving words

for anything good whatever, but He looks wholly to Christ in glory, knowing that Christ is his life, that he is called into fellowship with Him, and that now he lives upon Christ. There are thus two sides to the question. 1. The *negative* side—sin and self condemned, and put away by the death of Christ. 2. The *positive* side—Christ risen our life and righteousness, and we called by God into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord. These are the blessings the grace of God brings to every believer. All lost sinners who come to God *by Christ* have them. God takes the place of *Giver*; all that we do is to *receive*. “The *gift* of God is eternal life.” To whom? All who believe, all who come to God *by Christ*. You say, Is it for me? We reply in Scripture language, it is for “whosoever believeth.” And why through believing? Because God’s word says so; and faith alone *receives* everything from God through Christ, and *gives God all the glory*.

Look no longer then at yourself, or at your experience. Look simply to Jesus, who has entered into heaven with His own blood. Believe God’s testimony, that in the death of Jesus He made a just atonement for all your sins, and there you may read also your own death as to the old man. Look straight to Jesus now in God’s presence as the life, eternal life, of all who trust in Him. Doubt no longer. God still *gives*, so now *receive*. Begin to praise God for Christ’s finished work, His accomplished redemption, giving you, “a lost sinner,” access into God’s presence at all times. Read your title to stand in God’s presence for ever, not in your feelings or experience, but in the *blood of His Son*. Rest in God’s word; do not attempt to rest in your own thoughts. Be occupied with Christ, not self. Gaze upon that living Christ now in heaven, the new, and living, and only way into God’s peaceful presence. Hearken to His precious words—“He is able to save them to the uttermost (for ever) that come unto God *by Him* (that is, Christ), seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.” (Heb. vii. 25.) If, then, you come as a lost sinner to God *by Christ*, you may be certain of two things. 1st. That you are saved for ever. 2ndly. That Christ makes intercession for you. May God, by His Holy Spirit, so fill the vision of your soul with the glory and work of *Christ*, that you may see that God justifies you from all things through what Christ has done. “By Him all that believe *are justified* from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.” (Acts xiii.)

"THIS NIGHT."

"*This night thy soul shall be required of thee.*"—LUKE xii. 20.

"*I will pass through the land of Egypt this night.*"—Ex. xii. 12.

"THE ground of a certain rich man," says the Lord Jesus, "brought forth plentifully: and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry."

Dear reader, such was the history of one whose mind, and heart, and thoughts, and affections, were so engrossed with this world, that he had omitted God in his calculations. Entirely occupied with himself, and his interests, determined to make the best of this world and what it contained, he would seem to have forgotten God, and *His* existence altogether. His eyes were upon the earth; everything went well with him; of money he had plenty; his property was his own, and his crops were abundant. Occupied solely with these things, his one thought was to make himself comfortable in the earth, and enjoy what it afforded. *He had never thought of God at all.* Everything he looked at apparently belonged to him; he looked on the world as a scene, not only of present but future happiness; and he made his arrangements for "many years" of "ease," luxury, and happiness. Practically he denied the existence of a God. Poor soul! How many there are in the world at the present time just like him!

Perhaps the eye of one such may rest upon this paper. Dear reader, allow me to address a word pointedly to you. Are *you* at the present time making your arrangements for passing “many years” here? Perhaps you are a landowner with a fine estate, having tenants who discharge their liabilities regularly. Perhaps you are a member of Parliament universally respected both by your compeers, as well as by your constituents. On the one hand, doubtless, you are engrossed with improving the property that you consider in all human probability may be in your hands for the next twenty years; on the other, perhaps, you look with satisfaction at the list of voters that you can count upon as likely to support your interests through many a contested election to come.

Or perhaps my reader may be of the humbler classes —the tenant farmer of twenty acres, the small shopkeeper in a country town, or the lone widow with a large family, who is hard put to at times to make both ends meet.

The farmer from sunrise to sunset views the corn and root crops with the greatest satisfaction, his rent is a matter of no concern to him; he looks before him and sees a bright vista of many years of good prices and beautiful seasons; and he says, “This world is a pleasant place, and I’ll let the future take care of itself.”

The shopkeeper serves his customers with a smiling countenance; he can afford to give long credit; he is universally popular, and he spends the evening over the fire with his family, and of course never thinks of an eternity to come.

The widow sees it is no use now mourning for her

departed husband ; her children are growing up about her, they must be provided for ; and as she works late and early she turns it over in her mind where this one and that one will get a place, or what trade they are to follow as their years capacitate them for it. She forgets that ere long she may follow her husband.

Dear reader, if God were to say to you, “*This night thy soul shall be required of thee,*” wouldest thou be prepared to meet Him ?

Ponder it well, I pray you, ere you throw this paper aside, and think of the eternity that is before you. Twenty years seems a long time,—one hundred years, a thousand years, are lengthy periods,—but think of *an eternity* of woe in the place where “the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” Think of your soul’s welfare for a moment, I beseech thee, ere it is too late, and God has to give you up to your heart’s desire because you have “rejected knowledge.”

Take warning by the man of whom Jesus spake, take warning by Pharaoh and the gods of Egypt; message after message, warning after warning, had been sent to them, and they regarded it not. Pharaoh had but one reply, “Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go ? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go.” (Exodus v. 2.) “The Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts” (1 Sam. vi. 6), and *therefore* “God gave them over to a reprobate mind” (Rom. i. 28); and when the night of judgment came, they were found unprepared. What a solemn night that was ! “At midnight,” at the very moment of their deepest slumber, the angel of the Lord went forth ; and “there was a great cry, for

there was not a house where there was not one dead.”
(Exodus xii. 29, 30.)

Dear reader, *this night* may terminate your existence here; are you ready?

There were some ready even in Egypt. With God “mercy rejoiceth against judgment” (Jas. ii. 13), and there never was a scene of judgment where His loving hand did not spare a remnant. So here, and so even at the present time; as in those days there was a way of escape, so in these God has devised a “means whereby His banished should not be expelled from Him.” Let us contrast the two.

“Speak ye unto the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house according to the number of the souls. . . . Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. . . . And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and *when I see the blood, I will pass over you*, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.”

Such was God’s remedy for Israel, and thankfully did they without a moment’s hesitation avail themselves of it; they took the lamb, they slew it, they sprinkled the blood; and then calmly resting on the promise of the God in whom they believed, they sat down to feed upon the lamb in peace; their security was this, that

God had said, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you."

What is the sinner's mode of escape from judgment now? Is it not even this, that *Jesus* "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," has been "brought to the slaughter" (Isa. liii. 7), has "by His own blood entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us"? (Heb. ix. 12.) As Peter says, we "are not redeemed with corruptible things . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot." (1 Peter i. 19.)

From His side has flowed forth the blood that made peace with God. (Col. i. 20.) God's eye has rested on that blood, and whosoever, seeing their need of shelter from the coming judgment, accepts the remedy that God has provided, is secure from all condemnation; because God himself has said, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you."

Dear reader, do you tremble at the thought of death? learn that "the blood of Jesus Christ . . . which cleanseth from all sin" has met every claim a God of judgment has against you.

But a God of love could not be satisfied with merely sheltering Israel from judgment; and He therefore devises a way whereby He may have them *around Himself* in an entirely new position.

He opens a way for them through the Red Sea. Their necessity is His opportunity; and He gives them a perfect and entire deliverance from all their enemies, bringing them out in triumph through the depths of the Red Sea. Thus were they not only a people

sheltered from judgment, but as it were *alive from the dead*; for they had come out of what was a grave to their enemies on to new or resurrection ground.

Has not this likewise its counterpart with us? Christ has made a channel for us to pass through the waters of judgment. He has wrought a victory over our Egyptians, our enemies; He has gone down into the depths for us, and in His grave we may see the end of our sins, the close of our transgressions. He has risen from the dead, and in Him risen, we who believe have life, eternal life; we are “alive unto God in Jesus Christ our Lord;” not only shall we “not come into condemnation,” but we have “passed from death unto life.” (John v. 24.) We have through faith, life in a risen Christ—His own life.

The Israelites left the Red Sea behind them *never to return to it again*; we possess a life on the other side of death, and can never now die. Our earthly tabernacle may be dissolved; we may be absent from the body, and present with the Lord; but we never can return to the condition of death from which God has saved us.

More than this, the cloud overshadowed Israel; they were baptized unto Moses in the cloud; they were, as it were, already half enveloped in that which was the dwelling-place of Jehovah, the abode of the glory.

Is it not so with those that believe now? their feet are on wilderness ground, they journey through a dry and thirsty land; but already by faith the Father’s house of many mansions half envelopes them, and they long for the time when they shall be with Him where He is beholding His glory. (John xvii. 24.)

"DO YOU KNOW JESUS?"

JOHN BROOKS was by trade a compositor, and worked in London. For long hours both by day and by night he stood before his "case"—the framework where the various types are arranged—picking up, one by one, with ready fingers the little lead letters, and so placing them together in words, created, line by line, pages for the eager eye of the public.

Not being a strong man, the late hours and laborious work of the compositor's trade, together with the indifferent air of the heated workroom, told severely upon him, and assisted the growth of that fatal disease the seeds of which were in him.

While he was yet young, the unfailing hand of consumption smote him, and he began to languish. Every one saw that he was sinking, every one heard his cough, every one observed him shrink across the shoulders, and wear away—every one but himself; for he alone was deluded into fancying that he was getting better, and that he should soon be the man again.

But on, on moved the slow disease. Each day gained some fresh victory over its victim, sapping his strength, and pushing on to the very citadel of his life. "It is only a question of time," persons would say of him; and "it is only a question of time" may be said of us all.

The rough winds of trouble set in sharp upon him. He sought an entrance into the Hospital, that he might find a bed whereon to die; but no, its doors were shut against him; "full" was the answer, so he had to turn

again to his desolate home. He had sown in the passing hour, to sin, to folly, in health; and upon his dying pillow he would frequently confess to the tremendous truth, that what a man sows he shall also reap.

But we will not pursue this dark theme further, nor add another grief and vexation of spirit to the oft-told tale of this world's vanity. The mercy and grace of God visited this region of darkness and the shadow of death with the dayspring from on high.

The opportunity which God in His wondrous love had chosen to interpose upon Brooks's behalf was, as people say, man's extremity—it was the midnight of his trial. His house was destitute of the needful bread, his resources were dried up, and he knew not which way to turn. In this extremity his wife begged him to go out and try to borrow a sixpence of a friend just to buy some food. With an effort, and as it proved for the last time, he went out into the street, and gathering his wasting strength together, managed to walk slowly towards a neighbour's house.

Shortly after he had left his home a lady, a perfect stranger, called and inquired whether there was a sick man there, and whether he was in want, and then, unasked, put five shillings into his wife's hand, and went away. This money, so evidently sent by God, enabled his wife before he returned to spread their table, pay a small debt, and yet have a slight balance in hand.

Reaching home he found to his surprise that the need for the bread that perishes was supplied. But more than hunger was working in him. He felt his

need of Jesus—he had begun to see himself a sinner. It happened that as he dragged himself along the streets, coughing and aching, a young man a Christian, saw him, and could not refrain from speaking to him. Gently tapping him upon the shoulder he said—"You look very ill."

"Indeed I am," was the answer.

"And you are not long for this world, I should think, my friend," continued the stranger in a kind voice. "Do you know Jesus?" To this plain question Brooks replied "No, I do not indeed, I know too little of Him, and I feel I am not long for this life."

Placing a tract in Brooks's hand and requesting that he might be allowed to call upon him (which request was readily granted), the stranger went his way. The arrow had been guided by the blessed Spirit of God, and had pierced the sinner's soul. And these words—Do you know Jesus? took fast hold of him; he could not rid himself of them, and pondering over them he returned to his home.

New thoughts and new feelings occupied his soul. He did not know Jesus! what did this mean? He was a sinner, and He needed a Saviour; Jesus is the Saviour of sinners, and of the Saviour of sinners Brooks, a sinner, was ignorant! Terrible reality! *He did not know Jesus!* "This is life eternal, to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." The wrath of God abode upon him! Without Jesus he was lost, lost for ever. Without Jesus, hell would be his endless portion, and he did not know Jesus. Death now stared him in the face, not only as that terrible strength which severs man

from his fellows, separates husband from wife, and father from child, and closes the door for ever upon the world and all that is in it, but as somewhat far from awful, even that which seals the sinner's doom, and brings him into the prison of lost spirits to await the judgment; for "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."

He took out the tract which had been placed in his hand, and began to read it. He read it, and read it again, until he could read it no longer, and then he asked his wife to read it to him. It was about the end of a miser who died with a purse of gold clutched in her withered hand, with gold, gold, gold, upon her lips. Poor Brooks, saw himself also dying, with world, world, world, upon his lips. The awful realities of death, judgment, and hell stared him full in the face, and the dying man beheld himself to his terror stepping into death, awaiting the judgment, and doomed to hell-fire. The Spirit of God had made him conscious that "he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him."

After some time of deep anxiety about his soul, the Lord spoke peace to him. One evening at half-past eight o'clock, he said to his wife, "Some one is now praying for me I am sure, I feel it." Then he began to think of Jesus dying on the cross for sinners, and all at once it seemed just as if the Saviour hung before him, as it might be, in the corner of his room. He looked upon Him, and believed that Jesus died upon the cross for him, that His blood made atonement for his soul, and he was happy in the Lord. At the very hour that he felt some one was praying to God for him,

he afterwards learned that his friend who met him was so drawn to plead with God for his soul's salvation, that he shut himself up in his room alone, and cried to God on his behalf.

Relating this to the writer, with tears of joy rolling down his checks, he said, "I cannot understand it at all; I cannot make it out. Mercy for me! What does it all mean? Mercy for me! I was living without God in the world, aye, even while I was laid up in this very room, I would read the newspaper all Sunday long, and so I went on until the day in which I met my dear friend. But I don't want the newspaper now, not I, oh no; I have never wanted it since the day the Lord met me, for I love the Bible now, and my blessed Jesus too."

A person who had not heard of his conversion, who was unprepared to find him even seeking for mercy, came just at this time with a sorrowful determination to speak to him plainly as to the certain end of every man out of Christ. With a heavy heart he knocked at the door in — Street. Going up-stairs, he found Brooks propped up in an arm-chair by the fire-side, worn nearly to a skeleton, and panting for breath.

Seating himself beside him, he mournfully enquired, "How is it with you, Brooks?" and to his unutterable surprise was answered, "HAPPY, HAPPY, OH, SO HAPPY!" and this was said with unmistakable earnestness, while he stretched out his wasted hand to grasp that of his friend. "I am so glad to see you," he went on; "I am so happy; all is changed; I HAVE FOUND JESUS." "What! are you indeed saved for all eternity?" questioned his astonished friend, "just at

this last hour! and you who have lived so long without Christ! you who have lived a godless life! is it indeed so that your sins are forgiven?” So seeking by every method to test the foundation of Brooks’s joy, he laid the long roll of his life’s sins before him, unfolding his godless ways, his prayerlessness, his hatred of Christians, and his contempt of the name of Jesus, but to each charge poor Brooks while pleading guilty would only whisper—“He could not lie. He does say, ‘Only believe;’ ‘I will in no wise cast out.’ Yes, there is mercy for me, even for me.” Reader, hast thou like precious faith?

It was a remarkable instance of divine grace to this poor man, who so heartily disliked tracts, that a tract should have been used in his blessing. Oftentimes in his work at “case” he was obliged to pick up the lead types one by one which spell the name J-E-S-U-S, and thus had been forced through his unwilling fingers, letter by letter, such words as these, “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into this world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.”

Many a tract had been “set up” by him, indeed tracts similar to the very one which he read so eagerly upon his dying bed, he had been obliged to compose, the task he thoroughly disliked, and he would fling the hated tracts across the room. But now how changed! Now how he loved to say, often and often, Jesus loves me; Jesus died for me; I who am the chief of sinners. And now he loved to read the humble tract which spoke of Jesus.

Before he was converted his home was anything but

a happy spot, but it all changed when he became a child of God. His wife would say of him, “There has been no fretting, no complaining, since his friend first met him in the street; but instead, he has been full of joy. Formerly it was always, ‘Oh! that I could get out into the street!’ or something or other; but now it is never so.”

At the sound of his wife’s words about the street, the corner of the room where he seemed to have seen the Lord hanging on the cross before him, came to his mind, and with heavenly joy beaming upon his face, he said, “I never look towards the street now—never; I have done with it now. Once upon a time I used to sit in this chair watching the children playing in the street, and longing to have strength myself to be there again, until I fairly cried; but now I sit in my chair, turn my back to the window, and look up in that corner of the room, and think about my blessed Jesus. No more getting out in the street now for me; no, nor do I want it, since I have Jesus.” The intense way in which he uttered these words will certainly never be forgotten by the hearer of them, nor will that divinely-bright joy which beamed upon his face, and triumphed over its pale, wan features, death-stricken and wasting. In every sense, his back was turned upon the street and the children playing there, for his steady gaze was fixed in faith upon Jesus in the glory, and upon the blissful home of the saints of God.

Come, you scoffers; behold the light of heaven shining into the humble room of this working man! Enquire, ye reasoners, whence it is that death is to him a longed-for hour, and find your answer in his

faith ; faith, not only in the blessed work of the Son of God, but faith also in Him who is in the glory at the right hand of God. And come you, anxious soul, stand beside his arm-chair; look at the dying countenance, watch the sunken eye, the distended nostril, the matted hair ; see the thin pale hands, with the bones piercing his skin ; and hear his words,— “They tell me I am going to die ; they say they must see me off, they want to watch me go ; but I tell them (and this he said with triumphant smiles) *I shan't die.* Oh, no, I shan't die ; *I shall just fall asleep.* There is no death for me, for I am going to Jesus.”

One night Satan was permitted to trouble poor Brooks, but God dealt very tenderly with His feeble child, and restrained the malice of the evil one. It was a fearful night, but God delivered him from all his fears. In the morning he said, “I shall know another time what to do when Satan comes to trouble me. I won’t listen to him, but I will look up to my blessed Jesus.”

Often would he weep for joy at the grace of God in saving him from the pit. “To think that after sinning against Him all my life, He should have met me with His mercy the last time that I was able to walk out. Oh, it is wonderful ! There ! I cannot make it out,” he exclaimed, turning his head away, overcome with emotion.

As death drew near, he looked straight over the narrow stream to the glory beyond. Often and often he would say, “So happy ! oh, so happy ! How I wonder that I could have lived so long without Jesus.

What will it be to dwell with Him for ever, and to be just like Him. The sooner I am off the better for me.” “Look,” said he to a fellow-workman, who rubbed the tear from his eye as he looked on his wasted arm, “I can laugh at it, though it makes you grieve to see it; for it shows me that I am going soon to be with Jesus. It does not make me feel sad, oh no!”

We will now turn to that deeply solemn moment—the breaking of the silver cord, and the loosing of the spirit for its flight to God who gave it.

One who had watched with him through the night related how he would awake from his dozings exclaiming, “Oh, how beautiful!—how lovely!”—and other such exclamations, as if there were bright visions and sweet dreams of heaven passing before his eyes. He felt the blessing of the prayers of his brethren much. Grasping both the hands of a Christian friend who had come to bid him farewell, he said, with a beaming face, “I know that you have been praying for me—I *FEEL* it.” “Well, John, and how is it with you?” asked his friend. “Happy, happy in the Lord,” was the cheerful reply.

Gazing upon his wife who sat near him weeping, he said first, “Look at me, dear, see how happy I am—I am all right;” and then, after a pause, “My dear, oh! that I might know before I die that you are in Christ as well as I; but I do believe I shall find it out hereafter.”

There was one among his unconverted friends whom he was particularly anxious to see, and who at his request came to his bedside. “Well, John,” said his friend, “how are you getting on?”

Smiling, and taking both the strong man's hands into his wasted ones, he said, "I am so happy; I am so happy. I am going to heaven, Teddy, and you can tell my friends so. Oh, that I had known what I now know before this! Oh, that I had known Jesus earlier, and had not spent my life as, alas, I have done. What is all this world worth when compared to my present peace and joy? Ah, Ted," he continued, still grasping his hand, and still gazing fixedly upon him, "you WILL HAVE TO COME TO THIS! Are you ready? are you ready?"

It was too much for his friend, and he left the room weeping. Longing for the salvation of sinners came over him, and he begged some of the Christians present to leave him and preach Christ to others. "Leave me here; I am right for heaven. Go forth into the streets and tell others of Christ; go, brothers, tell them all of Jesus." Just then some other of his brethren in the Lord came into the room, and he asked them to join in singing a hymn of praise. They began the hymn, "I believe I shall be there." "I KNOW I shall," interrupted he; "there is no doubt about it—none; I know I shall, for Jesus loves me and I love Him." Then, asking for a hymn-book, he said with a smile, "I can sing too;" and so he did, his voice rising above the sound of the others present.

As his last moment came, he turned his eyes toward the friend who stood by his pillow, and saying, "When we meet again we shall know each other perfectly, and be like Jesus," he fell asleep.

SHORT NOTES ON DANIEL.

CHAP. vii. 13-28.

IN verse 13 a new scene is ushered in; the “Son of Man” comes with the clouds of heaven to the “Ancient of days,” and dominion, power, and glory are given to Him. The reason of His being thus presented in a double character is this: as “Son of Man” He has gained a right by his work on the cross, by His path on earth, to be made Head over all things. (See Heb. ii., Phil. ii.) As such He rules over the kingdoms of this world, administering them as the faithful servant, till He delivers them up to God even the Father, that God may be all in all. (See 1 Cor. xv.) Thus we have the Lord Jesus Christ in two characters here—as the “Ancient of days”—the one who has been of old from everlasting, and as the “Son of Man.” 1st, As the One who is “before all things,” and 2nd, As the One “for whom” all things were created, both things “that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers.” (Col. i.)

In verses 17 and 18 we find the interpretation of this vision, which states two facts, one we have already looked at, viz., That the four beasts are our kings which shall arise out of the earth: Nebuchadnezzar, Darius, Alexander, and the “Little Horn.” Secondly, A point not yet noticed is added, and it is that the saints of the Most High would take the kingdom; the beasts being set aside. Notice here the word “Most High,” which we have seen in the earlier chapters of this book to be the millennial name of

Christ as “the possessor of heaven and earth.” (Gen. xiv. 19.) It should, however, be read according to the marginal reading (high places) in every verse but the 25th, where it stands as it is, the name of Christ.

It occurs in various parts of the chapter in order to characterise the saints, for as we shall see a little lower down, there are more than one company of saints mentioned—those that belong to the heavens, and come with the “Son of Man” in His glory, for “the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee” (Zech. xiv. 5); and “when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory” (Col. iii. 4, also Matt. xiii. 43); and those that are on the earth—the suffering remnant, so fully described in the Psalms and Prophets (Zech. xiii. 9), give us their character. Daniel and his companions, Shadrach, Meshach, and Obednego, are types of them.

The saints then that belong to the heavens and come with the Son of Man, take the kingdom and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever. (See Rev. xx. 4, and 1 Cor. vi. 2.)

Precious truth, blessed end for them, after all their wanderings, in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth; being accounted “the filth, the off-scouring of the earth,” they have been through “a time of patience, for His name’s sake, have “laboured and not fainted,” but now their reward is given. The world which had cast them out, sees them coming with the Son of Man in power and great glory, “taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The saints which are thus brought upon the scene

form an important part of the rest of the chapter; in the first part we merely have the history of the beasts, now we have the saints as well, and find the beast persecuting them, but more than that, he prevails against them; only, however, till the "Ancient of days" comes, which soon puts a stop to it all. These are the times our Lord speaks of in Matt. xxiv. and so fully in the Old Testament Scriptures.

Note as well, that here in verse 22, it is the "Ancient of days" comes, he is thus identified with the One who has the dominion given to Him in verse 14, the "Son of Man" of Psalm viii.

But we find at the close of verse 22 saints mentioned again, who possess the kingdom on its being taken by the "Ancient of days," they are those who are spared, or who have escaped on the earth during the time of persecution, and who inherit the earthly kingdom, partaking of the long promised blessings to Abraham's seed, as well as comprising the heavenly saints who possess the kingdom, inasmuch as they have the judgment of it given to them; "for unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come."

Thus, in verse 22, we have both the heavenly and earthly saints brought before us as the result of the appearing of the Ancient of days, and the consequent judgment on the little horn.

In verse 23 the historical details of this "fourth beast" begin; it is not a consolidated empire, as we have already seen, (see verse 7,) but divided into ten parts; it is nevertheless terrible in its actions, ravaging the whole earth. During the existence of these ten kingdoms, the "little horn" arises from out of their midst. He is different from the ten and subdues "three"

of them. We have this verse explained more fully by Revelation xiii. 1-10; but the close of that chapter, be it remembered, is descriptive of the false prophet or Antichrist, though they are both "anti-Christian," but he has more of the ecclesiastical character about him.

The summing up of the iniquity of this "little horn" is his speaking great words against the Most High; here (verse 25) the name is used with reference to God, and is not characteristic of the saints; but more than that, he vents his malice by seeking to wear out the saints of God on the earth, who have refused to acknowledge him, but confess the name and authority of God as the lawful ruler, not of heaven only, but of the earth as well. Many of these as we may gather from the book of Revelation, are slain by him, but if thus losing an earthly kingdom, they have instead on the Revelation of the "Ancient of days," a place in the heavenly one. (Rev. xx. 4.) Some, however, will escape, and are the elect, for whose sake these days shall be shortened; but the Jewish laws and feasts will be given into his hand, only however for "three years and a half." Here it is that the dates come in, and we find their use, that they are given by God to be a comfort to His beloved people; so that when their oppression is at the worst they may have a sure ground of hope, and know that soon the oppressor will have ceased, the enemy perished out of the land, their darkness be past away, and the "Sun of righteousness arise with healing on His wings." For ourselves we need not to know the times or seasons; we are of the light, the children of the day. (1 Thess. v.) Our hope is in the coming of the Lord to take us to Himself.

MERCY AND NOT SACRIFICE.

THIS blessed expression of the mind of God occurs twice in the gospel by Matthew. It is a quotation from the prophet Hosea (vi. 6): "I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." What He looked for—what He had a right to look for in a people brought so near to Him was the exercise of a quality so eminently dear to Himself—so befitting a people called by His name—the exercise of mercy. "He delighteth in mercy." (Micah vii. 18.) It is the spring of His dealings with Israel—with man. There would be no hope for man without it. And hence when Jesus came into His ministry on earth, this was the key-note, the characteristic of His acts, His words, His ways towards men. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy," was among the earliest sentences in what is called, "The sermon on the Mount;" and mercy is the only suited thing for man. The mission of the Son, the wisdom of God, as well as the power of God declares it. And if suited to man because so deeply needed by him, surely it was infinitely worthy of the ever-blessed God, the only fountain of true, real mercy, to show it. Mercy never shone so brightly, so sweetly as in the person, the mission of the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh. The proud legal mind of the Pharisees in His day could not see this; and this came out on the first occasion I have referred to—the 9th chapter of the gospel by Matthew. "Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?" is the question put to

the disciples. Jesus answers it: “They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice; for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” Wondrous and blessed declaration of the Son of God, the Son in the bosom of the Father—the word of God! What majesty, what dignity is in it! He takes up the words of Jehovah by His prophet,—His own words,—and spake them *as* His own. “*I* will have mercy, and not sacrifice; for *I* am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” Sinners *all* were. Righteous, there were none to call. The Lord knew this, and justifies His ways of grace to sinners. He will have *mercy*. Who dare be offended at this? who has a right to be offended? Blessed indeed for us that mercy reigns—reigns in the bosom of our Lord, that mercy is the spring of all His dealings now with this poor lost and ruined world. “His mercy endureth for ever” will be the song of Israel by and by, when they are brought to see their need of it, and taste its sweetness in their souls. But sinners now are called—called to repentance, called to turn from evil unto God—to lift the eye to Jesus crucified, to look, to trust, and live. *Now* is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.

But if we look on to the second occasion when these words appear, we find the legal mind at work again, and met again by rebuke from Jesus. (chap. xii. 1-8.) He, the Lord of Israel, the Lord of all, is passing through the corn, the harvest that His bounteous hand had given; His followers were hungry, and began to

eat. Was there not provision for the poor and needy in the law of God ? (Levit. xxiii. 22 ; Deut. xxiii. 25.) Did not He, the Master, take the lowest place—the Son of Man, who had not where to lay His head ? The poor disciples freely take what grace divine had provided—provided by the hand of creative power, by the word of inspired truth. Provision for the needy, that is written on the works and in the word of God. Pharisees cannot see this, or if they do they must bind it in some legal wrappings to obscure the grace, to hinder the free flow of God's unbounded love and goodness. One greater than the temple, greater than the universe, is there, and marks it all. The blessed One, the holy One pleads, as He ever does, the cause of His disciples : “ If ye had known what this meaneth, I will have *mercy*, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.” O how blessed is this word—the *guiltless* ! Jesus speaks it, speaks it of His own.

“ Who now accuses them
For whom the Surety died ? ”

The Law-giver has been the Law-fulfiller; for jot or tittle of it could not pass away till all had been fulfilled. He magnified the law, and made it honourable ; it never shone so brightly as when Jesus took it, was made under it, died beneath its curse, blotted out the transgressions that were under it in His most precious blood. (Heb. ix. 15.) I say again,

“ Who now accuseth them
For whom the Surety died ?
Or who shall those condemn
Whom God hath justified ?
Captivity is captive led
Since Jesus liveth, who was dead.”

"The Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath day." In the dignity and glory of His person He is above all, has right and title to remove all, set aside all that would hinder the full blessing, the full joy and endless liberty of His redeemed ones. For it is redemption title that He acts upon, as well as creation title, when He says, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." This is the rule, the order of the dispensation, of every dispensation in which God is known, and acts *as God*, towards man upon earth. I speak now of what is past and present—this long-suffering time. It is the rule, I say. Judgment is His strange work, only resorted to when grace has been finally resisted and despised. God will have mercy, and not sacrifice. Sacrifice man cannot offer. Blood of bulls and goats were all in vain. God gave His only Son—His well-beloved—to be a sacrifice for sin. That one offering once offered has for ever perfected them that are sanctified. The blood of atonement shed upon the cross at Calvary avails for ever for the sinner's need. "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." The sacrifice was on God's part, mercy flowed through that to ruined man—mercy, and peace, and grace, and life eternal. This is the rule then for the Christian,—"Be ye therefore merciful, even as your Father which is in heaven is merciful." It is the rule for the servants of God. A Jeremiah in his day might have commission to root out, to pull down, and to destroy (Jer. i. 10); but the Christian servant, the preacher of the gospel, must not even root the tares up, lest he root the wheat up with them. (Matt. xiii.) Patience and long-suffering become us. If there is one thing more than another that would

bring sweet alleviation into the trials of the people of God it is this, the *practice of forbearing, forgiving, active mercy.* (1 Peter iii. 8.) The more we know of God the more we shall desire to be like Him, to be imitators of Him, as dear children, even in this vale of tears. I say the rule, because God is always God, and never can be any other. Many of the provisions of the law show His tenderness, as to the touching appeals of the prophets. The blessed Jesus might well say of these Scriptures, "Search"—they testify of me.

CREATION, JUDAISM, AND CHRISTIANITY CONTRASTED.

WHEN we think and speak of God as Creator, it is necessary to bear in mind that we are not *now* in the creation which He originally formed and pronounced to be good. On the contrary, the earth as we know it, is as it has become in consequence of the fall of Adam, and since God has personally retired from it, for He could no longer be where sin has entered, except to judge it. Man himself should also be regarded *morally* in these two states, in which creation has just been viewed, that is to say, unfallen as Adam was when first made, and fallen as he became through his own transgression. For example, "God created man in His own image;" but "Adam begat a son in his own likeness," and this is where our ancestry commences. God as Creator, though no longer *resting* in the works of His hands, (having driven out the creature Adam, and closed the gates of Eden by the flaming sword,) yet exercises a general providence over all things, so that

not a sparrow falls to the ground without His knowledge. This providence is consequently universal and permanent, though, in a special sense, it marked a relation between God and mankind in the world before the flood, till the earth was filled with violence and God swept it away. It was not till after the deluge, and the confusion of tongues at Babel that *active* government was introduced, consequent upon the state of corruption and violence which had come to its head in the world before the flood. Definitely, the calling out of one nation from all the existing nations of the earth, was the occasion of introducing a *form* of government into the midst of Israel, to which people, under Moses, God as Jehovah gave statutes and laws. Finally a theocracy was established, but with that nation alone of which David and Solomon were the representative kings. The conduct of men, which was so corrupt before the flood, became the object of God's care, and was sought to be met in His goodness in these two ways. Man, or rather the Jew, was put under law as to his morals, and under statutes and judgments as to his political relations; whilst the administrative power necessary to maintain the majesty of Jehovah was conferred on such men as Moses, Aaron, Joshua, the prophets, and lastly the kings, and these in connection with Jerusalem, the city of the great God.

Conduct, however, instead of being elevated by these means, whether in the Jews individually or the nation relatively to the rest of the world and to God, became so corrupt that finally John the Baptist was sent to preach "the baptism of repentance" to the people of Israel, and to prepare the way of the Lord. This con-

duct, and their national disobedience, instead of being reached by conscience upon the testimony of John, or even of the Messiah Himself, and the nation (like Nineveh of old) brought by it to confession and repentance, only became active in the expression of growing enmity against the Baptist and the Lord. This enmity also reached its zenith in the betrayal and crucifixion of Christ, against whom “the kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against His Christ: for of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together.” (Acts iv.) Rebellion against God, treachery towards Christ, false accusation, and a thousand other forms of wickedness, found their centre and their object in the rejection of the Son of God, who had been sent in love as God’s grand resource of blessing to mankind; but they said, “This is the heir; come, let us kill Him, and seize upon His inheritance.” A particular and general state of society like *this* plainly showed the place and power of Satan over a fallen race, and that remedial measures were all short of the great necessity. Centres of influence among the Jews, seats of learning amidst the Greeks, and other influences in the then existing world, abundantly witness that, however educated and governed, man was estranged from God in the very springs of his nature. Even Jerusalem with the visible glory to accredit her, and the nation under the immediate cultivation of Jehovah, which should have been a testimony to “the living and true God” amidst the idolatrous Gentiles, were no better than the uncircumcised nations

around them. "The strong man armed (Satan) kept his palace, and his goods were in peace;" moreover he was as now "the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience." The fitting occasion presented itself, and the devil headed the world's rebellion by putting it into the heart of Judas to betray his Lord and Master by a kiss, and for thirty pieces of silver.

Conduct could be no longer a question as to its probable character. Men (Israel) had broken the law, and were nationally under its curse. Who could deliver them? One point of agreement had been found against Christ by Satan, the Jews and the Gentiles, all with one consent said, "Away with Him; not this man, but Barabbas." Man was no longer merely a transgressor, but stood before God in the deeper dye of a betrayer, and murderer of the Prince of Life. What must God do in righteousness for His own Son? This is now the question before heaven, and earth, and hell! It is plain enough what Caiaphas and Pilate are doing with the elders and soldiers, but what is Christ likewise doing on the cross on behalf of these His enemies? Satan and men have one thought in common, and they have carried it out, alas! in killing the Lord. But have the Father and the Son no thought in common as to the cross? no purpose to bring out into light by which the craft of the devil and the wickedness of man is to be set aside, and that for ever? Is there no "determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" which bursts in upon a benighted world, like the light of the morning, at the cross of Christ? Yes; for this same cross, which was the expression of human hatred, has become the witness of God's love to sinners, even when

confederated in such flagrant iniquity. The cross, which was the outlet of man's enmity, is now the inlet of God's grace; for what is Christ doing on it, and by means of it? He, though sacrificed and slain by wicked hands, "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." He has there taken the place of Substitute for the guilty, and bearing their punishment under the hand of God, cries, "My God, my God, why hast *Thou* forsaken me?" The judgment thus due to us has been borne by our Surety, and "by His stripes we are healed." The blood of atonement is shed and accepted by God, so that He can be just, and the justifier of the ungodly who believe in Jesus. The veil of the temple is rent from the top to the bottom, and the sin which hitherto presented a barrier to God, unless He came forward to judge it in those who committed it, has been removed by the death of Him who has put sin away. Christ's work on the cross has thus become the new ground of God's present actings in unbounded grace; for He must reveal Himself to those on whose behalf Christ has suffered, according to the merit and claims of that very Christ who "was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification."

Salvation, a personal salvation for the sinner, has thus become the result of the work accomplished on the cross. It is not merely forgiveness or pardon, which leaves the man what he was, with the hope of doing something better, but ending in disappointment; on the contrary, the man is born again, born of God, not of the will of the flesh, so that if "any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away, &c., and all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to

Himself by Jesus Christ." The man (that is to say, the believer) is not what he was; it is not merely a question of conduct, like Moses and the law, but of his own state of being, a personal matter. A believer can therefore not only say that Christ has borne his transgressions in His own body on the tree (all that He *did*), but also that "He loved *me*, and gave Himself *for me*;" and this is a totally different matter—a redemption.

This redemption is not only by blood, the blood of Christ, but is established in life; "the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life," and this life is in His Son. Being one with Christ, the new Head of life—not the Adam life improved, but a new and divine life—we can, as the natural product, bring forth fruit unto God through the Holy Ghost, which dwelleth in us. Moreover, in the power of this new nature, as born of the Spirit, the believer overcomes the world, the flesh, and the devil; and this is where true Christian conduct begins. "For me to live is Christ" is the character of a believer's walk, the little while that he is waiting on earth for Jesus. The precious blood of Christ has put away all our sins; the sufferings and death of our Saviour have exhausted the judgment of God. This same Christ has brought in life, eternal life, and we have it in having Him; and by oneness with the Lord—where He now is in ascension glory—we are made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. The hope of being perfectly in the image of the Lord is before us, and of being not only like Him, but with Him, and of seeing Him as He is.

Redemption, therefore, is nothing less than our being delivered and taken out of the condition in which we personally were, as men in the flesh and children of Adam; and this redemption is into a new standing before God, in the life, and righteousness, and image of the second man, fruit of His travail and blood-shedding, and of the Father's love. Redemption which thus changes us *personally*, takes us out of the sphere into which we were born, and in which we have lived below, and puts us into our proper place and home which the Lord is gone to prepare for us. We shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air and be for ever with Him. Christ, at the right hand of God, is the only real progress, and if any man knows this Christ as his Saviour, as the one who in love became the Substitute on the cross, he is pardoned, justified, and sealed *now* as an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Christ. This is the only true advancement, and "there is no condemnation."

As to all else it is in the wrong world where Christ is not, and into which the judgment of God is to be poured. In the meanwhile man walks in a vain show, battling with a thousand enemies that he knows are stronger than himself, and waiting only for the last and strongest of them, which is death. His breath is in his nostrils, and the moment it ceases all his thoughts perish. His wealth and honour cannot go with him, but he leaves them for one who comes after him; and who can tell (as Solomon says) whether it shall be a wise man or a fool? "Three score years and ten" have only brought him to a dead-lock, which, alas! has swallowed him up, and when the morning of resurrec-

tion for the unbeliever comes, and he stands before the great white throne, upon conduct—his own conduct—what can he say to God for one sin of a thousand? What can he say for refusing the voice which so often spoke to him from heaven? What can he say for refusing the blood of Christ which cleanseth from all sin? A believer will never stand there; for the Lord his Saviour has borne his sins, and answered for them on the cross, by the judgment He then bore, and finally and for ever put them away by the precious blood which He shed. “This is life eternal, to know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.” The things that “were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ; yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.”

Here is the only true attainment—“that I may know Him, and be found in Him;” and this is the only real progress—pressing on to the mark of our high calling which we have of God in Christ Jesus.

THE LORD HIMSELF SHALL COME.

1 THESS. iv. 18.

THOUGH the path be dark and lonely,
Jesus comes our hearts to cheer;
And we know full soon He'll take us
Far from all that grieves us here.

Many mansions are awaiting
All His chosen ones below;
And a place He is preparing
Far from every hurtful foe.

Even now we have Him with us
'Mid assembling twos and threes;

And though weak and failing oftentimes,
Faith His presence always sees.

Yet we long for that bright morning
When we shall together rise,—
See Him face to face in glory,
Meet Him yonder in the skies.

'Tis this hope that makes our journey,
Through this Christ-rejecting land,
Seem a short one from the glory
Of the other golden strand.

Over there our Jesus waiteth,
All our hopes are centred there;
Very soon He'll come and take us
Where His glories we shall share.

W.

"ALL THINGS ARE FOR YOUR SAKES."

2 COR. iv. 15.

THIS is a wonderful proof of divine love. God has raised up the Lord Jesus, raised Him from the dead. He will raise us up *by* Jesus. All will be presented together in the day of glory; *all* the saints. But in the meantime, how about all these difficulties, perplexities, trials, sufferings? How about the scene around—the circumstances that seem to baffle, to mock all effort, to disappoint all hope? what is the answer to this? "All things are for your sakes," that the abundant grace might, through the thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God. If you take the highest point, God's object in creation and redemption, His glory and the glory of His Christ,—"All things were created *by* Him and *for* Him,"—*i.e.*, the Son, you have a great thought, commencing in eternity past, if I may use the expression, and looking on to eternity

future, the glory of God in Christ filling the scene. These are the things not seen—the things eternal. Faith has to do with them; they are *real*, they are *sure*; nothing can affect them. But this little time state, this little gap between eternity past and eternity future, is that arranged for too? Yes, “all things are for your sakes.” The love, the wisdom that planned, the infinite tenderness that arranged the whole scene, watched the whole process, seeing the end from the beginning, regards all with an eye to the blessing of His saints. Jesus risen and exalted rules in the heavens; He is the God of *grace*; *grace* reigns through righteousness by Him. Grace *abounds* (1 Tim. i. 14), grace *calls, justifies, sanctifies*, begins, carries on, completes the work in each and all. It is all to the praise of the glory of God’s grace. This may quiet the heart. “Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him.” “All things are for *your* sakes.” How *He* has loved us!

STEPHEN'S DEATH.

ONE has said, speaking of the manner of Stephen’s death in Acts vii., he was alive in death. A fine commentary upon that happy moment in the history of the church, and a true commentary, too. Jesus, I may say, died in death that we might live in death; He met death in all its horrors made sin for us, suffering death as judgment, and the pouring out of the righteous wrath on sin. But we speak of life in death, and though under the hand of murderers, the region of life and glory is seen beyond and above it, and is seen as the home of our spirit.

This is indeed to live in death;
“Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”

It is victorious life we receive from the risen Lord. “By death He destroyed him that had the power of death,” and the life He imparts to us is life in victory, not life to be tested as it was in Adam (Gen. ii. 17), but life that has been already in the battle and has won the day (as we speak). The display of this in Himself was sweet to Christ, the acknowledgment of it as in Him by the faith of others was sweet also. In John xi. we see the first, that He delighted in the opportunity of displaying victorious life; He waited therefore till the sickness of Lazarus had ended in death, that He might then shine as the resurrection and the life. And in Matthew xvi. 17, He lets us know with what delight He had listened to Peter’s confession, which owned Him as the one who was about to break the gates of brass in pieces, to give His saints power over hell and the power of death.

SCRIPTURE QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

“Is it essential to my salvation, that I should be enabled to say I know my sins are forgiven? I have been told, that if I were to die without being able to say I was forgiven, there would be very little hope of my safety.”—E. G. S.

The Scriptures teach, that every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is forgiven. “Whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins.” (Acts x. 43.) “In whom *we have* redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.” (Eph. i. 7.) Forgiveness of sins is therefore clearly the present blessing of every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. And observe, it is based not upon our thoughts or feelings, but on the already accomplished work of Jesus the Son of God. That Christ “purged our sins” is a fact; to have the enjoyment of this fact is another thing,

and depends on simply receiving God's truth about it. A lack of clear scriptural instruction as to the person and work of Christ, accounts for many not having the joy and comfort of forgiveness in their souls. Scripture says: "Being *justified by faith*, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. v. 1.) We earnestly and affectionately recommend you to search the Scriptures to know God's mind on the subject, and not to listen to men. Faith says, "Let God be true, but every man a liar." (Rom. iii. 4.)

"Can any one be a disciple and not a child?"

Disciple simply means "scholar"—one who receives or professes to receive instruction from another. Judas was a disciple. A child of God is a true believer. "Ye are all the children of God through faith in Christ Jesus." (Gal. iii. 26.) There seem to have been many who took the place of scholars or disciples in the days of our Lord who never really believed in Him. We read in John vi. 64-66, "But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him. And He said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. From that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him."

"Is every believer sealed by the Holy Spirit? When does it take place? And how may I know that I am a sealed one?"

1. If you mean by "every believer" those who believe on the crucified, risen, and ascended Son of God for salvation, most certainly they are sealed. Knowing only John's baptism is far short of this. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." (Rom. viii. 9.) The saints at Ephesus, and the faithful or believing in Christ Jesus, are thus addressed: "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." (Eph. iv. 30.)

2. The sealing takes place *after* believing; it could not be *before* believing. "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." (Gal. iv. 6.) After ye believed, ye were sealed. (Eph. i. 13.)

3. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." We know Jesus as Lord at God's right hand by the Holy Ghost. He too is the Comforter, and takes of the things of Christ, and shews unto us. We may (D.V.) enter more into this important point another time.

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